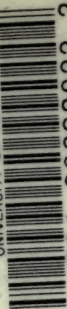


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James Sprunt studies in history and political  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

# The James Sprunt Historical Publications

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J. G. DE ROULHAC HAMILTON } *Editors*  
HENRY MCGILBERT WAGSTAFF }

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THE HARRIS LETTERS



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THE HARRIS LETTERS

BY

H. M. WAGSTAFF





## THE PREFATORY NOTE

The Harris letters which appear in this issue of the JAMES SPRUNT HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS represent, for the most part, a collection of the letters of Charles Wilson Harris (b. 1771, d. 1804) to his uncle, Dr. Charles Harris, and to his brother, Robert Wilson Harris. They were donated by William Shakespeare Harris, a son of Dr. Charles Harris, to the North Carolina Historical Society at an unknown date, but probably before the Civil War. The other Charles Wilson Harris letters, those written during his connection with the University of North Carolina (1795-1796), were found in a bound volume of manuscripts in the early faculty records of the University. They are about ten in number, and along with them have been inserted two Caldwell letters to Harris. There are two other Harris letters in addition, one by Robert Harris, father, and one by Robert Wilson Harris, brother of Charles Wilson Harris. The sources whence these were obtained are subjects of a foot-note to the respective letters. The chronological order has been preserved in the presentation of the whole series, this method appearing better to reflect their interest than the other alternative of grouping those to the same correspondent.

The name "Harris" is perhaps one of the most frequent in North Carolina. This must have been true at a very early period also, since the name covers full four and one-half pages in the index of the Colonial and State Records. The particular Harris family from which Charles Wilson Harris sprung was a very prolific one and has a large number of surviving representatives in the state at the present time. It traces its descent back to one Edward Harris of Wiltshire, England, who removed to Ayreshire, Scotland, in the latter part of the 17th century and there brought up a large family. One of his sons, Edward by name, married Flora Douglas of the celebrated Scotch border family of that name. Five sons of this union, James, Samuel, Thomas, Richard, and Charles, appear to have emigrated to America sometime in the second

quarter of the eighteenth century. Some of them settled in Pennsylvania and the others in Virginia. Later, probably about 1751, Charles came from Virginia to North Carolina and purchased a large tract of land on Rocky River in the Poplar Tent district of the present Cabarrus County, but at that time in Anson. This district was at the time receiving a strong tide of Scotch-Irish immigrants and soon became a populous Presbyterian stronghold. This Charles Harris was twice married; first to Jane McIlhenney and, second, to Elizabeth Baker. From the first marriage was born in order Robert, Martha, Jane, Thomas, and James; and from the second, Charles and Samuel Harris. Robert Harris, the eldest of these offspring of Charles Harris, inherited "Mill Grove," the home seat of his father on Rocky River, and became a man of fortune and influence in his county. He married Mary Wilson, daughter of Zaccheus Wilson, a signer of the "Mecklenburg Declaration," and of the same strong Scotch Presbyterian stock as himself. As a Revolutionary patriot and soldier Robert Harris, "Esquire," served in General Joseph Graham's command until he lost his arm in the skirmish at Clapp's Mill, a preliminary incident of the battle of Guilford Court Courthouse in 1781. With slight hopes of his recovery, his companions gave him into the care of an old German settler and wife, with the injunction to "care for him well, as he was a man of consequence, and they would be rewarded." (See Graham's General Joseph Graham and His Revolutionary Papers, pp. 335-337.) Harris' descendants state that Mrs. Harris dreamed her husband was wounded and on the faith of the dream traveled with a slave, Jack, as her only attendant from her home on Rocky River to the scene of the battle, seventy-five miles away, found her wounded spouse with his caretaker, nursed him to convalescence and brought him safely home. To him, by this stout-hearted wife, were born three children, each proudly bearing "Wilson" in their Christian names. They were Jane Wilson Harris, Charles Wilson Harris, and Robert Wilson Harris. Jane, the eldest, married Nathaniel Alexander, son of John McKnit Alexander, secretary of the "Mecklenburg Conven-



tion." They had nine children and numerous descendants survive. Charles Wilson Harris was born in 1771, and Robert Wilson Harris in 1779. Their mother died a few years after the Revolution, their father subsequently marrying the widow of General William Lee Davidson, who fell in the Revolution. Robert Harris lived to a ripe old age, dying in 1808 and lies buried at Poplar Tent Church, where he was for many years ruling elder.

Charles Wilson Harris graduated at Princeton in 1792 and was awarded the Mathematical oration. He then spent one, or two, years with his half-uncle, Dr. Charles Harris, at "Favoni," the home of the latter upon an estate adjoining that of Robert Harris and part of the original property of the eldest Charles Harris. Here he applied himself to the study of medicine under his uncle's guidance, apparently with the intention of entering that profession. Nevertheless, in 1795, at the date of his election to the tutorship of Mathematics in the University of North Carolina, he was teaching in Prince Edward County, Virginia. His letters thereafter, with the notes subjoined, sufficiently outline his life and services. They disclose a character of worth and dignity. At twenty-five years of age he was presiding over the fortunes of the state's infant University and in this role he manifests a maturity unusual even in that period of our state and national life in which abilities ripened early. The trustees relinquished his services with great reluctance. His seven years of life after entering upon the practice of law at Halifax were filled with earnest and successful endeavor and undoubtedly would have been crowned with high achievement but for his early death.

The editor wishes to express his appreciation and thanks to Mrs. Maud Craig Matthews, of Atlanta, Georgia, and to Mrs. Atwell C. McIntosh, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, great-grand daughters of Robert Wilson Harris, for their kindness in placing at his disposal certain of their family records that bear upon the genealogy of the Harris family.

H. M. WAGSTAFF.

Chapel Hill, N. C., Jan. 15, 1916.



## THE HARRIS LETTERS

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UNCLE,

I was not a little diverted with the Rev'd. Robinson, my partner in teaching, when a few days since, he proposed in a serious way that I should study divinity and settle on some glebe in Virginia. The inducements I need not mention. He placed them in as flattering a view as possible. When he could not bend me to his will; for the promise of a Bishopric in this county could not induce me to trouble myself with these non-sensical Church preferments; he turned off his proposal by saying that I ought to study divinity in some measure, it contains the best system of morality, and morality is necessary to a man, let his calling in life be what it may. So it is with the world. Every one will tell you his knowledge is necessary, no matter what business you follow. The lawyer as well as divine repeats a long tale to the intended physician, each in favor of his own profession, the former of the advantage the study of law may be to him. The great Blackstone says a knowledge of law is necessary to a physician, that he may be useful to families upon sudden emergencies, in drawing up the formal part of last wills and testaments. Great encouragement indeed for one who has scarcely time to perfect the study of medicine, to set into the perusal of endless commentaries, reports, statutes, etc. But without so much preparation I have almost determined to go at once to physic. When I first undertook my present business I expected it and my professional study<sup>1</sup> would agree, but it is otherwise. Next winter is the time appointed in my own mind for beginning on this new study. I shall acknowledge with a great deal of gratitude any directions you may transmit me. What are made the rudiments of this art and what branches are generally entered upon first? I may at a leisure hour look over some of them.

The murder of the king of France cannot be easily forgotten.<sup>2</sup> His fate is lamented by almost all ranks of people.



Aristocrats pity him sincerely and the Democrats think he deserved a better end. The zealous protestant and avaricious merchant alone find their account in his death. The former confesses the king's death was unrighteous, yet adds that in the hand of God, it may be the means of advancing the cause of religion, and crushing the power of the pope. The latter wishes the perpetrators of the murder may be repaid in their own coin, that their remittances may be signed with their own blood, adding that the king was a good-hearted fellow, loved good eating and drinking. The very demand of his table was an encouragement to merchandisē. Yet the commotions occasioned by his death will enhance the value of American produce in Europe, and American bottoms alone will have an unmolested navigation in the adjacent seas. By a calculation from the time of declaring war between England and France,<sup>3</sup> few European vesse's will be expected in our ports after the 10th of next month. The forces of France as voted by the National Convention, will consist during this summer of 500,000 men.

I wrote to Edwin Reese<sup>4</sup> immediately after my return but have received no answer. I cannot suppose my letter has miscarried because I have received answers to some that were sent with it.

Your humble servant,

CHARLES W. HARRIS,  
*Mecklenburg.*

Dr. Chas. Harris, April 28, 1793.

My love to Aunt Sally and Peggy.

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<sup>1</sup>At this date Harris intended to enter upon the study of medicine, doubtless inspired by the influence of his uncle, Dr. Charles Harris.

<sup>2</sup>Louis XVI was sent to the guillotine the 21st of January, 1793. The news had reached America in late February.

<sup>3</sup>France declared war against England the 1st of February, 1793, ten days after Louis XVI's execution.

<sup>4</sup>Son of Jane Harris and Rev. Thos. Reese and therefore first cousin of Charles Wilson Harris. Edwin Reese graduated at Princeton in the class of 1794 and was a student at the date of this letter.

DEAR UNCLE:

I have just come from P. Edward which place I left in tip-top spirits, expecting on my return to find at least three or four letters in Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> However I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Bruce<sup>2</sup> from Guilford from whom I heard much of the public and a little of the private affairs of your county. He told me that Maj. Harris<sup>3</sup> (I suppose Thomas) made a very respectable opposition to the election of Mr. Locke.<sup>4</sup> I am not acquainted with the foundation of this gentleman's popularity which seems to be so extensive. I wish he may answer his constituents' expectations, but pray that he may never be so successful in adopting sanguinary measures for the regulation of our great union as he has been in the regulation of his private affairs, otherwise we shall all be d—— wags, deserters of the general cause as soon as we are able to think for ourselves. By the same gentleman, I was certified that Sam'l. Caldwell<sup>5</sup> has had the good fortune to pick from the top of Mt. Fairview that full-blown, most beautiful, and only remaining flower, Miss A——. I fear that while he has free access to so fair an angel, he will often evade those wars which a minister from his profession has striven to wage against the world, the flesh & the D-v-l himself. He is a gentleman who has hitherto fought with a great deal of courage and success.<sup>6</sup> And if we judge from his perseverance he is impelled by no small force to the support of the cause he has undertaken. But Mechanics (if not daily experience) teach us that any force may be overcome by the application of a proper power.

A spectacle of weeping has lately called the attention of the Virginians. A sail of 300 vessels from Cape Francois containing the remains of the wretched inhabitants of that place.<sup>7</sup> The towns of Richmond, Wm.burg and Norfolk were liberal enough to advance near 6,000 Dol. for their immediate relief. I would have been at Norfolk at the very time this fleet arrived where I had an appointment to meet Mr. Robinson but was prevented by a great inflammation in

my eyes occasioned by the excessive heat of the weather in which I rode from P. Edward. I have been studying anatomy, but not as a physician, it is very pleasing and highly worthy the particular notice of anybody who reads for amusement, or general information. The greatest difficulty in learning must be, I presume, the majority of their names infer origin, insertion and uses.

Write to me as soon as possible, and you will not find any neglect in, Dr. Sir,

Your nephew, &  
most humble servant

July 30, 1793

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris,

Since I wrote to you, a letter from Cousin Edwin dated about May 1st came to hand by post. He was well, had become a whig, and is very much attached to the place, a sure sign of diligence. College never pleases an idler. He hates his tutors and even the very ground he is confined to.——

DOCTOR CHARLES HARRIS, ESQ.

Cabarrus

No. Carolina.

<sup>1</sup> Petersburg was on the regular stage route from Philadelphia southward.

<sup>2</sup> Probably George Bruce, member of the general assembly from Guilford, 1798-1801.

<sup>3</sup> Major Thomas Harris, brother of Robert Harris and uncle of Charles W. Harris. He was a brave Revolutionary officer of the Continental line and fought under Washington at Monmouth and Trenton. Transferred South, he was severely wounded and taken prisoner upon Gates's defeat at Camden in August, 1780. In 1793 he was Federalist candidate in his district against Matthew Locke, Republican, but was defeated.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Locke, of Rowan, member of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Congresses, 1793-1799. He was now at an advanced age (born in 1730, died 1801) and had been prominent in the affairs of North Carolina during her transition from colony to state. He was an active participant in the Regulator troubles of 1770-71, at which date he was county member from Rowan in the Colonial Assembly, serving in that capacity until 1775. In the latter year he became a member of the 3rd Provincial Congress of North Carolina and was likewise a member of the 4th and 5th. In the last he assisted at the construction of our first state constitution in 1776.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel C. Caldwell, son of Rev. David Caldwell of Guilford. He was born in 1768, was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Orange at nineteen years of age, and in February, 1792, became pastor of Sugar Creek and Howell churches in Mecklenburg county. He served the Sugar Creek Church continuously for thirty-five years until his death in 1826, being one of the best beloved and most useful men of his day. He married Abigail Paine Alexander,



daughter of John McKnit Alexander, signer of the "Mecklenburg Declaration" and secretary of the convention.

<sup>6</sup> Foote's Sketches, p. 195, show that during Caldwell's "first ministrations in these congregations (Hopewell and Sugar Creek) it pleased God to send a reviving time, in consequence of which there were upward of seventy young communicants admitted to the Lord's Table in one day."

<sup>7</sup> These were French colonial refugees fleeing from Cape Francois (now Cape Haytien) on the north coast of the island of San Domingo. In 1791 the slaves of Hayti, France's most profitable colony, inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution, rose in rebellion against their masters and so overwhelming was their superiority in numbers they soon had the mastery. Horrible things were done in the island until Toussaint L'Ouverture, by his genius as statesman as well as warrior, came to the head of the movement and wrought a semblance of order into the land. Many of the fleeing French colonials found safety in the smaller islands of France in the Windwards; many took shelter in Cuba under the sovereignty of Spain; many others came to the continent. The body referred to above was perhaps the largest single group that reached our shores, though many of them later went to Louisiana (then a Spanish possession) where they joined other smaller bodies that had made direct for New Orleans.

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#### UNIVERSITY

April 10th 1795.

DR. SIR, We have begun to introduce, by degrees the regulations of the University,<sup>1</sup> and as yet have not been disappointed. There is one class in Natural Philosophy & Geography & four in the Languages—

The constitution of this college is on a more liberal plan than any in America, & by the amendments which I think it will receive at the next meeting of the trustees, its usefulness will probably be much promoted. The notion that true learning consists rather in exercising the reasoning faculties, & laying up a store of useful knowledge, than in overloading the memory with words of a dead language, is becoming daily more prevalent—It appears hard to deny a young Gentleman the honour of a College, after he has with much labour & painful attention acquired a competent knowledge of the Sciences; of composing & speaking with propriety in his own language, & has conned the first principles of whatever might render him useful or creditable in the world, merely because he could not read a language 2000 years old. Tho' the laws at present require that the Latin & Greek be understood by a graduate—they will in all probability be mitigated in this respect. These old forms, "which have been sanctioned by time but not by utility" ought to be dispensed with. I have

lately found many good hints on education in a book entitled the rights of woman.—a book of very great merit, the production of an original genius—& penned in such a strong, masterly style that you would scarcely believe it the work of a woman—For we are taught to believe, by many able writers & tolerable accurate observers of mankind that the natural weakness of a woman's body extends to her mind, & becomes characteristic of her thoughts & words as well as of her actions. Miss Mary Wollstonecraft is the lady born effectually to rectify these misrepresentations from which so much evil has spring. Miss' intention is to bring about a total reform in the education of women—. But takes occasion to speak of the errors in the present plan of teaching young men & Boys in Europe. "The memory" says she "is loaded with unintelligible works, to make "askew of, without the understanding's acquiring any distinct ideas; but "only that education deserves emphatically to be termed cultivation of "mind, which teaches young people how to begin to think." She effectually over throws Chesterfield's plan of bringing up boys. The amendments which she proposes are too Numerous to be detailed in a letter, but are such as do the greatest honor to the authoress & may be highly beneficial to mankind—— That there is much wrong in the old manner of educating is plain & whatever alterations will be made in our University will be made by those who can be actuated by no other principle than general utility—At present we find much difficulty in procuring books - The trustees have ordered 200 Dol. to be expended for that purpose; but it is very uncertain when the Books will arrive; Dr. Williamson<sup>2</sup> is commissioned to purchase & he is so totally engaged about his own book<sup>3</sup> which he is preparing for the press, that he may forget others of less importance - - Col. Moore<sup>4</sup> presents us with Globes Mr. Benahan<sup>5</sup> with an air pump as soon as it can be procured - We will shortly have an Electrical Machine & other trifles.

Our society is not so good at this place as we could wish. My only resort is to Mr. Ker who makes ample amends to me

for the want of any other - he is a violent Republican & is continually deprecating the Aristocratical principles which have lately prevailed much in our Executive.<sup>6</sup> The debates on self-created societies<sup>7</sup> has brought to light many unrepubli- can principles that have been secretly growing in the bosom of our government. The Revd. Stanhope Smith<sup>8</sup> has in the last winter become a politician - He declaims against Lib- er- tinism in politics as being attended by no less an evil than Atheism - - Smith has been long known to be an aristocrat & he is not a man of such conciliating manner as to have avoided the creating some personal enemies. A writer styled Arbiter in Oswald[']s] paper<sup>9</sup> is not delicate in his remarks on the vice- president & is indeed illiberal in some general reflections on the Clergy - - Smith's sermon referred to by Arbiter on the subjects of national Gratitude lies on my table - It has many fine turned periods; many fine thoughts - But besides Mr. Arbiter's objections - His description of the present govern- ment is too highly coloured to be the copy of a human fabri- cation, his Encomium on the President is quite fulsome. Tho' he be the greatest man in America, it smells strong of Brittish seasoning. In page 23 he says "I see him like a rock in the midst of the ocean, receive unshaken all its waves, violence, intrigue, faction, dash themselves to pieces against him, & fall in empty murmurs at his feet." - - -

I have been engaged in such a manner since I arrived here, that I have done but little for myself; Blackstone's 1mo. Vol. is nearly finished but the remaining vol. will re- quire much more time and attention. I wish to ground my- self well in the principles of Law, yet have made no pro- vision for supplying books of a proper kind. I have in- terested myself much in the education of my brother;<sup>10</sup> he is now growing fast & receiving none of those improvements which he ought. I could not prevail with my father to let him come to this place. I wish you would again mention it to him in a way that you may think proper; it can scarcely be pecuniary want that hinder his complying with my request. Nor can it be I hope, any distrust of my principles, as I have

heard suggested; he & I have ever been very free in speaking on tenets. & I never observed any great degree of disapprobation. If the latter be the cause I have no more to say -- . Please send me your communications by every opportunity.

I am yours  
with much  
respect

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris.

Aunt Sally will please accept of my best wishes for her happiness & Mrs. Ker<sup>11</sup> has particularly requested that her respects may be received thro' the medium of my Letter, tho' never acquainted personally with aunt,<sup>12</sup> by hearsay she is interested in her welfare.

DOCTOR CHARLES HARRIS  
Cabarrus County.

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<sup>1</sup>The University was formally opened the 15th of January, 1795, with the Reverend David Ker the presiding and only professor. The first student, Hinton James, of Wilmington, arrived the 12th of February. The number reached forty-one by the end of the term, the Monday after the 10th of July, when the first vacation began. Ker had been chosen by the trustees in January, 1794, to launch the institution. He was a Presbyterian minister, then residing in Fayetteville. He was a recent Scotch-Irish immigrant and had received his education at Trinity College, Dublin. Harris had been chosen in March to tutor in mathematics and was just now assuming his duties. The "regulations" referred to were a "Plan of studies and By-Laws," reported by a Committee of the Trustees and ratified by the board, January 10, 1794. According to the plan, instruction in the new institution for the time should be in belles-lettres, the languages, particularly English, a client and modern history, botany, agriculture (theory and practice), the principles of architecture, astronomy, and natural philosophy by the experimental method. Dr. Battle attributes (History of the University of North Carolina, Vol. 1, p. 49) the virtues of this well balanced plan to the influence of Dr. Samuel E. McCorkle, chairman of the committee on a "Plan of Studies," and to Dr. Hugh Williamson, probably the most enthusiastic member, Davie excepted. It is also a matter of interest that Harris, the second teacher chosen, was, as shown by the context of his letter, so thoroughly in sympathy with the practical character of the curriculum.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Hugh Williamson, a resident of Edenton and member of the board of Trustees of the University. He was born in Pennsylvania, 1735; graduated at the University of Pennsylvania in 1757; professor of mathematics in the University of Pennsylvania, 1760-64, resigned and studied medicine in Edinburgh, Scotland; settled for practice in Philadelphia in 1772. Having removed to North Carolina, Williamson in 1782 represented the borough of Edenton in the state Assembly and in the same year was chosen a member of the Continental Congress, serving first to 1785 and again from 1787-1788. He was a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention and signed the completed Constitution, and was a representative in Congress under the Constitution from 1790 to 1793. He died in 1819, then resident in New York.



<sup>3</sup> Probably Williamson's "Climate of America," published in 1811; or his "History of North Carolina," published in 1812.

<sup>4</sup> Alfred Moore, member of the board of Trustees, 1789-1807, a Revolutionary patriot and commander of North Carolina Continental forces at Charleston during the British attack upon that port in 1776. In 1781-82 he raised and commanded a volunteer force to assist in harassing Cornwallis in his marches through the state. In 1798 he was elected a judge of the Superior Court of North Carolina, and in the following year, upon the death of Justice James Iredell of the United States Supreme Court, Moore was appointed by President Adams to fill his place. He served until 1805, resigning on account of ill health, and died in 1810.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Bennehan, of Hillsborough, an early friend of the University and a trustee from 1799 to 1804.

<sup>6</sup> During his second term (1793-1797) President Washington, now held in such grateful regard by all his countrymen, was not spared caustic criticism by that body of opinion which was rapidly being welded by Jefferson and his lieutenants into the Republican party. Democratic ideals, to be worked out through the principle of popular sovereignty, characterized this party and brought it into sharp contrast with whatever forces that seemed to emphasize "classism" in the nation and over-centralization of power in its government. Washington, while deprecating political divisions in the citizenship, leaned toward the Federalists, who opposed the rising tide of social and political ideals of Jeffersonian democracy. Hence he incurred the censure of possessing "aristocratical principles," a charge tending to discredit in the minds of the Republicans.

<sup>7</sup> Washington was the first president of the "Society of the Cincinnati," founded at the end of the Revolution among the officers of the army, membership in which was to be perpetuated in the eldest male descendant of original members. Its objects, besides forming an hereditary order, were to promote friendships formed in the war and to deliberate in secret upon the welfare of the country. The hereditary feature and secret deliberation purpose aroused bitter criticism and denunciation among the popular leaders, the storm growing so great that the Society suspended its meetings for a number of years. It had seemed to the democratic masses an effort to establish an hereditary aristocracy, and so organized as to have undue weight upon the life of the government and country.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Stanhope Smith, D. D., LL. D., president of Princeton University from 1795 to 1812 (resigned). He was an arts graduate of Princeton in 1768. (See note to a subsequent letter).

<sup>9</sup> Oswald, Eleazer, Publisher of the Independent Gazetteer, or the Chronicle of Freedom. (Phila.) 1782-1796. He was a violent opponent of the policies of the Federalist party and particularly of Alexander Hamilton as a political leader. Oswald, though an Englishman, entered the ranks of the American Army during the Revolution and fought under Arnold both at Quebec and at Saratoga.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Wilson Harris entered the University sometime within the year, probably in August.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Ker, wife of David Ker, born in Ireland 30th of March, 1757; died in Natchez, Mississippi, 20th of November, 1847.

<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Sara Harris Harris, first wife of Dr. Charles Harris. After her death Dr. Harris married Lydia Houston Brevard.

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UNIVERSITY.

June 1st, 1795.

DR. SIR,

By Col. Osborn<sup>1</sup> I received your letter & am doubly glad that Heriot<sup>2</sup> is in such a good state of health - It must add much to the happiness of your family -- Your business as

physician having increased so much within a year past that if ever you had any serious intentions of coming to this place, you must before now have relinquished it altogether. Many of our trustees are for immediately filling several professorships with proper persons -- and at any rate if every thing succeeds tolerably - it cannot be long before there is a professor of Chemistry, Anatomy, & -- There is no physician nearer to this place than Hillsborough, some of our students from the East, being very delicate are frequently attacked with returns of their Disorders & have suffered for the want of medicine - I have therefore with the advice of Mr. Ker determined to keep a small apartment of Medicine for the accommodation of the students & the neighbourhood should they think proper to apply - until some physician shall think it worth his while to settle near us -- This I undertake without the most distant prospect of making any thing by it. The medicine I will give out at the cost & charges. If any advantages accrue they will be the pleasure I shall receive from finding myself useful & necessary to any person & the renewing occasionally that smattering of physic which I learnt when with you, an acquisition that I never wish to lose.

Inclosed I send you a plan of the University lands - the village - ornamental grounds springs, & -- But it would be unnecessary to enter into a Geographical description - The general opinion is that the place is most happily situated, - a delightful prospect, charming groves, medicinal springs - light & wholesome air - & inaccessible to vice - the last property Revd. Pettegrew<sup>3</sup> bishop from Edenton added when he visited us. I send you also a print which is to be put on every book with the donor's name. --

I am, sir, with sincerity

yours CHAS W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris.

Make my respects agreeable to Aunt Sally and Elihu. --

DOCTOR CHARLES HARRIS,  
Cabarrus.

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Adlai Osborne, of Rowan, a Trustee of the University from 1789 to 1814. He graduated at Princeton in 1768 and fought through the Revolution, beginning his military service as lieutenant colonel of the 2nd North Carolina Continental Regiment in 1775. He was father of two sons, Alexander and Edwin Jay, who received diplomas with the first class graduated by the University (1798), and another, Adial, who graduated in 1802, and still another, Spruce McCoy, who graduated in 1808.

<sup>2</sup> The "Heriot" referred to in this and the following letter is probably a daughter of Dr. Charles Harris, though the editor has only the context to substantiate this assumption. He further believes she is the same person called "Peggy" in subsequent letters.

<sup>3</sup> Reverend Charles Pettigrew, of Lake Phelps, Tyrrell County, father of John and Ebenezer Pettigrew, two students in the University (1795-1797). Ebenezer Pettigrew was a representative in Congress, 1835-1837. The elder Pettigrew was chosen a bishop in the Protestant Episcopal organization, but seems never to have been consecrated, refusing to go to Philadelphia for that purpose because of the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in that city.

DR. SIR,

UNIVERSITY,  
July 21st, 1795.

I have just returned from a short tour which I made through Chatham after our visitation<sup>1</sup> on the 13th instant. At which time I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. McCorkle<sup>2</sup> but could not get time enough to write a letter to you - This morning I heard from Mrs. Hogan that your family was well except Heriot who is ill with the chin-cough - I would have been very happy in receiving a few lines by her. The number of students in the commencement of orders<sup>3</sup> will amount to 54 -- Such numbers crowding in the trustees thought proper to make some further provision for their accommodation & instruction -- They determined to proceed as soon as possible to the large building<sup>4</sup> - 120 feet long— 56 broad, 3 stories high - They are to receive proposals at the next general assembly. But as such a work could not be in any degree of readiness in less than two years - the building commissioners are ordered to build a two story wooden house with 6 large rooms and a school room, with a purpose to accommodate the younger boys & is to be termed the Grammar school<sup>5</sup> - When this house becomes no more necessary for its present purposes it is intended to be converted into a dwelling house for some future professor who may have a family - In a rough statement of the funds by the trustees they amounted to \$15,460 -- \$10,000 of this they desire to lay out in purchasing stock 6 per cent, that interest may be a



permanent provision for the University. You must be certain that with our present number - our hands must be very full of business. It is a most difficult thing to procure a deserving teacher. A Grammar master is now wanted to take charge of the house which is to be built directly - - Mr. Ker and I have liberty to procure one at 130 Dol. per an. & board. Several have been proposed but none that could be altogether approved. With this day's post I dispatch a letter to a Mr. Brown, an acquaintance of mine on James River - I have great hopes that he will accept of the offer & therefore we can do nothing until an answer arrives - We have at length determined to collect a Museum<sup>6</sup> at this place - - the trustees unanimously came into the idea - & have agreed to use all their influence individually to procure curiosities - A number of gentlemen on the seaboard have been engaged to procure marine productions - But it belongs to the back country gentlemen to favour us with many curiosities, with which this country, particularly the S. Western territory abounds - These scattered about in every bodies hands, soon become lost & are never of any general advantage - - but when collected will become the source of amusement and instruction to thousands - - & when a number is collected due care will be taken to preserve them - - As you have considerable genius in this way & at the same time a warm friend to this institution, I hope you will interest yourself and your acquaintances to collect something worth while and forward them to us - They should be accompanied with labels or letters, showing where they were sent from, and giving some philosophical account of them, I intend to take upon me to write to Cumberland<sup>7</sup> this purpose - There are certain times of the year when many go from your neighbourhood. I will endeavor to have letters conveyed to my father before that time, but if I should not, and a favorable opportunity offers, you would do us a favor to write to Dr. Donald and George McWhirter on this subject - & also mention to my father to write to some of his relations in the same place - It will be well to request the persons to whom you write that they send



a letter informing me how far it will be in their power to assist us - Various petrified objects, uncommon fruits, curious stones, bones of non-descript animals, specimens of Indian clothing and their arts and manufactures will all be very acceptable - The Oil which Uncle Nathaniel<sup>8</sup> brought from Cumberland is well worth preserving, perhaps you could send it by some early chance attended with a description of the place where it is found. We have a blank-book into which we enter all curiosities with the Donor's name & the description attending it. Write to me by post. When will you visit us. Give my kindest respects to Aunt Sally<sup>9</sup> -----

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris

The only curiosity yet received is an Ostrich egg from Judge Williams<sup>10</sup> - Inform Col. Smith<sup>11</sup> that Robert<sup>12</sup> was very well about six days ago when he started to see Mark - I expect him back two days hence - Col. Smith would do something in collecting for the Museum.

DR. CHARLES HARRIS,  
N. Carolina.

By post  
postage paid  
at Chapel-Hill.

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<sup>1</sup> The first University Commencement, July 13, 1795. In pursuance of an ordinance of the board of Trustees it was the duty of one trustee, in alphabetical order, from each judicial district, to visit the University at examination times and report on result of their inspection to the board. This practice did not last long.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was born near Harris' Ferry, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. His parents, Scotch-Irish immigrants, removed from Pennsylvania to Rowan County, North Carolina, when their son was about ten years old. He received preparations for college under Rev. David Caldwell in Guilford. He entered Princeton and took his arts degree in 1772, returned home and became pastor of Thyatira church in Rowan, serving in this capacity until his death (in the pulpit) 21st June, 1811. In addition to his labors as a most useful Presbyterian minister for a period of thirty years, he conducted a classical school at his house in Rowan, and so effectual an instructor was he that of the seven young men composing the first graduating class at the University (1799), six of them had been trained by him. He was trustee from 1789 to 1801 and at the date of the above letter, chairman of the board. For an extended sketch of the life and services of Dr. McCorkle, see Foote's Sketches of North Carolina, pp. 350-362.

<sup>3</sup> The second term of the University began the middle of August, 1795.

<sup>4</sup>The South Building at the University, originally called "Main;" its corner stone was laid in 1798 but it was not finally completed until 1814.

<sup>5</sup>The Grammar School went into operation in 1796, with an advanced student, Richard Simms, as temporary master. In December Nicholas Delvaux and Samuel Allen Holmes were made instructors in it, though Holmes was soon advanced to a tutorship in the University, his place in the Grammar School being taken by William Richards, a strolling English actor. (A note on Richards appears below).

<sup>6</sup>For a partial list of the specimens gathered by interested donors for the University's early museum, see Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, Vol. 1, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup>The Tennessee country along Cumberland River. Immigration in these years was setting strong toward the trans-mountain region.

<sup>8</sup>Probably a maternal uncle of the writer. Charles W. Harris had no uncle on his father's side named Nathaniel.

<sup>9</sup>Dr. Charles Harris was twice married, his first wife (above) being Sara Harris, and the second Lydia Brevard Houston.

<sup>10</sup>John Williams, of Granville, Superior Court judge from 1778 to 1790, and Trustee of the University from 1789 to 1799.

<sup>11</sup>Probably Robert Smith, of Cabarrus, lieutenant in the 4th regiment of North Carolina Continental troops in the Revolution.

<sup>12</sup>Robert Smith, doubtless son of "Col. Smith," was registered at the University in 1795. He did not graduate.

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UNIVERSITY,  
Aug. 13, 1795.

DR. UNCLE,

I was happy in being informed by a letter from Capt. Houston<sup>1</sup> that your family is increased by a son<sup>2</sup> & that all is well - I should have expected to receive the first intelligence of such an occurrence from yourself - It was altogether unforeseen by me. Every addition to your family will certainly make you more of the citizen. Tho' your sincere & general benevolence had already made you a warm friend to our institution & every plan for public Utility, yet since the birth of a son you must feel yourself more nearly interested in the affairs of the University. --

Our number is now fifty-six - & a great prospect of increasing considerably in a short time. We have used our endeavours to procure another assistant. But have not been successful. We have written to a young man of my acquaintance who lives below Williamsburg in Virginia & expect an answer by the next post. ----

Our news at this place has given us more trouble & disappointment than information - I joined Mr. Ker in getting Brown's Daily paper<sup>3</sup> but it has not arrived by the two last

posts. & if it does not come more regularly we must discontinue it. There is an universal uproar against the treaty<sup>4</sup>. It is said that we must garrison & defend the western posts, for the benefit of Brittish merchants - ; that the East-india trade was on a better footing before; that the West india trade is entirely destroyed - ; that the hands of our legislators are tied down, that they can never take such measures for their future security as the patriotic Madison once proposed -- that the reciprocity held forth in several articles is a mere nullity. The Fayetteville Politicians have risked their credit in toasting this prodigy of negotiations while other companies were openly drinking him & his treaty to hell & damnation -- There has been some disagreeable business in New York on this subject & the great financier Hamilton<sup>5</sup> has been very roughly handled by the people because he was supposed a friend to the treaty.

The museum has made but small progress - & consists of only one Ostrich egg<sup>6</sup> -- . I hope when it is generally known that such a collection is making in this place we shall receive considerable assistance.

I had a very favourable opportunity about three days ago, of sending letters immediately to Cumberland by a gentleman who would travel with expedition -- I endeavoured to interest David Wilson, James Wilson & Dr. Donald in making collections & if no accident happens they can make some return before Winter.

My law-progress, you must conclude is slow from the great share of business & attention to which is at present necessary for me to apply myself, - tho' slow, it is I think firm & determined ---

I am, dear sir, with  
much respect  
Your's

Dr. Charles Harris.

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

DOCTOR CHARLES HARRIS,  
Cabarrus.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Captain James Houston, of Lincoln County, an active Whig in Revolutionary days and whose company contributed greatly to the defeat of the Tories in the battle of Ramseurs' Mill, June 20, 1780. An alternative supposition as to the identity of the "Capt. Houston" above is that he was the father of William Houston of Iredell, who was a member of the first graduating class at the University (1798).

<sup>2</sup> William Shakespeare Harris, born 1795, became a worthy representative of his father's family, though he never attained or desired political preferment. He served his county as representative in the lower branch of the state legislature in 1830, 1852, 1860 and 1862.

<sup>3</sup> Probably the "Philadelphia Gazette and Universal Daily Advertiser," a daily newspaper published at Philadelphia from 1794 to 1800 by Andrew Brown and Samuel Relf, and continued after 1800 as "Relf's Gazette."

<sup>4</sup> The Jay Treaty, concluded by Chief Justice John Jay with England in November, 1794, and submitted to the Senate in June, 1795, and ratified by the constitutional two-thirds majority without a vote to spare. Even the Federalists reprobated the treaty, while the Republicans universally denounced it as a rank betrayal of American sovereignty. It certainly seemed far from advantageous to American interests. By its terms our western posts were to be evacuated by the British, though without compensation for their long retention (1783-1796). The Mississippi River was to be open to British shipping; American citizens to be recompensed for British captures of their ships in the West Indies; French privateers to be shut out of our ports. The treaty even conceded the English contention that a natural flag could not protect non-contraband enemy goods upon the high seas. It made no recompense for the large number of American slaves carried off by the English armies at the close of the Revolution; and secured no redress for the impressment of seamen from American vessels, nor any promise that the practice would be abandoned. A number of other important provisions were also favorable to the English. The treaty, however, had the one virtue of averting war with England toward which we were rapidly drifting.

<sup>5</sup> Hamilton even at first condemned the treaty, pronouncing it "an old woman's treaty," but soon came to its defense in order to save the credit of the Federalist party. At one open air meeting in New York City he was stored for attempting to defend it.

<sup>6</sup> Judge John Williams, of Granville, superior court judge from 1778 to 1790 and trustee, 1789-1799, was the donor of the ostrich egg.

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CHAPEL HILL,

Nov. 12th, 1795.

DR. SIR,

I wrote to you some time ago, since which nothing of importance has occurred in our business. Our trustees are not likely to do much during the meeting of the assembly -- The more I know of their affairs & of my own dispositions & qualifications - the more I am determined against engaging in their business for life - I of late made an effort to procure some law books & Motherby but was disappointed -- I will again make another attempt at Philadelphia when I have collected a little more money -- With my father<sup>1</sup> I send an extract of Lavatie's Physiognomy & hope



you will accept of it & let My father & the rest of our family read it - It is a book which has afforded me much amusement & I hope some real improvement - It appears to me, because I am not well enough acquainted with the science, that his observations are often vague & uncertain - But what ever uncertainty there may be in it - I am fully convinced that it is well worth the attention of a young man who in life may have all characters to deal with & ought early to begin to learn to distinguish them ----- I have sometimes thought that Motherby's Dictionary might not at this time be so agreeable to you or useful - I would take pleasure in procuring any others if you would only take the trouble of mentioning them - If you send me no advice of this kind I will order the book which I first intended -- I am more & more sensible of the advantages of which my reading on several subjects with you is likely to bring me & tho' I did not study them in that particular manner which I might, yet some general ideas remain strongly impressed on my mind which gives me a pleasure in, & a taste for a further improvement in them - Give my kindest respects to Aunt Sally & believe me your most

sincere friend

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Dr. Chas. Harris -----

I have not been able to write as I would wish- -I have been all the time with Mr. Ker<sup>2</sup> & my father who are comparing their religious creeds -- Mr. Ker & Mrs. Ker present their compliments to you & Aunt & assure you that we often think of you

DOCTOR CHARLES HARRIS,

By Robert Harris Esq.

Cabarrus.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Harris, of Cabarrus, father of Charles W. Harris, appears from the context to have been visiting his son at Chapel Hill upon this date. A sufficient reference to him appears in the preface.

<sup>2</sup> Though the editor has never seen any statement as to where the bachelor Harris lived during his two years of service to the University, the first two years of its actual life, his intimate relations with the Ker family, as indicated in the above letter and others of the series, tend to prove that he resided with this family who occupied the president's house (then upon the site of the present Swain Hall), begun in 1793 and completed for occupancy by 1795.

UNIVERSITY,  
June 1st. 1796.

DR. FRIEND,<sup>1</sup>

In your last letter you expressed some uncertainty respecting the place in which you would attempt the practice of Physic. This, in a great measure prevented me from writing as often as I could wish. You see by my address that I am still a teacher tho' much against my inclination -- It is difficult in this illiterate part of the United States to procure any person that is able and willing to undertake the arduous task of instructing. I continue in my present situation because the trustees cannot procure any person to perform the duties of my office. I earnestly desire to be engaged in some professional business in the world -- One of my motives for writing you at this time was to receive some information of Mr. Caldwell<sup>2</sup> who graduated one year before us & spoke the first Salutatory Oration -- I have heard that he has been employed in teaching ever since he left College -- if he is not yet permanently settled, and has no objection against removing farther south I make no doubt but he may be placed in a situation in this state altogether agreeable -- I must beg leave to trouble you in this affair & request that you would by post give me any information concerning his place of abode; employment &, which you may think necessary -- Or if you can let him know of the enquiries which I have made, it will be still a greater favor.

The University contains 37 students -- The employment which I would relinquish to Mr. Caldwell if he would. agreeable to the trustees is the Professorship of Mathematics & Natural Philosophy worth at present more than 500 Dol. per Ano. & in time to come will be more valuable.

I am your sincere friend,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Dr. Jno. C. Otto.

Postage paid.

I mentioned Mr. Caldwell's name to the trustees. Write by the first post to Chapel-hill. University of N. C.

DOCTOR JOHN C. OTTO,  
Philadelphia, or  
Woodbury --

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Conrad Otto, to whom this letter is written, was an A. B. graduate of Princeton, of the class of 1792 (the class of Harris). He received his A. M. from Princeton in 1795, and an M. D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1796. From 1798 to 1802 he was physician to the Philadelphia Dispensary, and from 1813 to 1835 he was a physician in the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia. From 1840 to the date of his death in 1844 he was Vice-President of the College of Physicians, Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Caldwell, A. B. Princeton, 1791; Tutor, Princeton, 1795-96; Clerk of Faculty, Princeton, 1796; Professor Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, University of North Carolina, 1796-1817; President of University of North Carolina, 1804-12, 1816-35; A. M. Princeton, 1794, also University of North Carolina in 1799 (honorary); and D. D. Princeton, 1816. He died in 1835. For a full account of the services of Caldwell to the University of North Carolina, see Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, Vol. 1, p. 173, *et seq.*

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NASSAU HALL.

SIR,

I have just received a letter from you by Mr. Otto requesting information respecting my present employment and expectations.<sup>1</sup> I am still unsettled in the world, tho' I have passed thro' most of the time I allotted for obtaining a profession. It has been my purpose for sometime past to apply for license in the ministry next spring. This, however, is an event perfectly at my own discretion. And I am unable yet to say how far your letter may influence my decision. I have been two years and an half studying divinity, and if I had chosen might have requested license some time ago. I am now employed in the business of tutor in this college. I commenced a year from the present date. I should feel myself so diffident with respect to the duties of a teacher of mathematics that I should scarcely know how to venture the responsibility of such an office, were it not that I had some time since an opportunity of becoming acquainted in some

measure with my strength. And tho' I still apprehend that I do not possess the qualifications requisite to such an office, I believe I should be able to prepare myself with assiduity and attention. I wish to receive further information of the situation of affairs, before I form or express an opinion. To know the several offices of the University and the names of those who fill them—the buildings that belong to it—& the conditions of the funds, if there are any, the classes and number of students in each—under what regulations the students are at present and whether on the whole you think the labor of teaching, fatiguing and oppressive. I wish you to mention also the expenses and whether the country and situation is healthy. By being so particular in my enquiries, I would not have you imagine that I would expect to be accommodated in the best manner with everything that is agreeable and convenient. But as I am almost entirely ignorant on all the subjects, I have enumerated, that I may form any determination at all it will be necessary that I be able in some degree to estimate them. You know the advantages my present station possesses, and therefore will easily conceive that it would be by no means wise to barter them away for an uncertainty. Mr. Hobart<sup>2</sup> is my colleague, and tho' I have not the happiness of a personal or intimate acquaintance with him, yet I have the satisfaction of being assured that I may rely without reserve on every information you may offer, and that you or those with whom you are connected may not want the same advantages of information on your side, Dr. Smith,<sup>3</sup> Dr. Minto<sup>4</sup> or any of the people of Princeton in whom you are willing to confide, will no doubt give you every information you may ask. I ought now to mention that it will not by any means be convenient for me to leave this place till next fall after commencement. From your own knowledge of affairs here, you will be able to judge the reason of this.

MR. C. W. HARRIS,  
Chapel Hill,  
North Carolina.



<sup>1</sup> This letter to Harris, in the bound manuscript volumes of unpublished records of the University is in Caldwell's handwriting, but without date and signature. It is doubtless a copy of his original letter to Harris, made by himself and placed in the faculty archives, as a matter of record, during his early period of service to the University. It is his reply to either Harris' inquiries of Dr. J. C. Otto about Caldwell, (see preceding letter), or his reply to a letter from Harris to himself direct, but transmitted through Otto. Its date should probably be the latter part of June, 1796. The succeeding letter in the series, of date July 24th, is Harris reply, continuing the negotiations for Caldwell's services and incidentally throwing a clear light upon the conditions, internal, and external, of the eighteen-months-old University of North Carolina.

<sup>2</sup> John Henry Hobart, A. B., Princeton 1793; Tutor 1796-1798; Clerk of Faculty Princeton 1796-1798; Professor Pastoral Theology and Sacred Oratory General Seminary, N. Y., 1821-30; Assistant Protestant Episcopal Bishop, New York 1811-16; Protestant Episcopal Bishop New York 1816-30; A. M. Princeton 1796; and D. D. Union 1807.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Stanhope Smith, Tutor Princeton 1770-73; Rector Hampden-Sidney Academy 1775-79; Clerk Board of Trustees Princeton 1781-95; Treasurer Princeton 1783-86; Professor Moral Philosophy and Theology Princeton 1789-95; President Princeton 1795-1812; A. B. Princeton 1769; A. M. Princeton 1772; D. D. Princeton, also Yale, 1783; LL. D. Harvard 1810; resigned Presidency Princeton 1812; and died 1819.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Minto, M. A., LL. D., Professor Mathematics and Natural Philosophy Princeton 1787-96, died 1796.

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UNIVERSITY July 24th 1796.

SIR,

You will, without doubt, be expecting some account from me long before the arrival of this but I delayed giving an answer to your letter until the meeting of the Board of Trustees which was on the 15th inst. that I might have it in my power to write to you more fully. For as a teacher in the University I had no authority to give you any encouragement that could be relied upon—without the concurrence of the Trustees.

In answer to the several queries which you proposed, I am to inform you that the offices<sup>1</sup> of the University are President, who is professor of Rhetoric & Belles-lettres; Professor of Moral Philosophy; Professor of Natural Philosophy; Professor of Mathematics; of Chemistry; & of Languages—in all five Professorships. Revd Ker who has lately left this place was professor of languages & performed the duties of President pro tempore. Revd McCorkle, D. D. of this state was appointed to the professorship of Moral Philosophy, but as he could not immediately accept of the appointment and the trustees began to be very doubtful respecting his qualifi-

cation for that business the appointment has been retracted.<sup>2</sup> Revd. Holmes is now Professor of Languages. I am the other professor who besides the duties of my particular office, am obliged for the want of teachers to attend to the Moral Philosophy class & perform the duties of President. Besides there are two tutors<sup>3</sup> of the lower classes. As to the classes, the Moral Philosophy class is the first and consists of six young men. They will study Paley, Burlemagni, Montesquieu, & Mallet's elements of history. The mathematical class will consist of 15 who will study Simson's Euclid, Simson's Algebra, Trigonometry, Surveying, Navigation, and if required, Conic Sections, Projection of the Sphere & Nicholson's Nat. Philosophy & Ferguson's Astronomy. The Geography & Arithmetic class will be composed of 10 students, the Latin class of nearly as many, & there will be five or six in Greek. The tutors each attend to near 30 scholars, so that the whole number will be about 100. I have not been very particular, or accurate in some of the statements of the classes because it is now vacation & the young gentlemen when they meet, will commence their studies in new classes. We imitate Nassau Hall in the conduct of our affairs as much as our circumstances will admit. The Professorship of Mathematics & Natural Philosophy will not be more burdensome nor laborious at this place than at Princeton. I have been at the University since the first commencement of business & determined to devote myself during my stay entirely to its interests. For this reason I have always been employed in duties which were not annexed to my professorship & which I think it will not be necessary for any future professor to perform. To me they were not oppressive. I received my reward in finding myself useful to an institution which was zealously patronized by the whole state. Our situation is without doubt healthy—that was a circumstance which particularly recommended Chapel Hill for the seat of the University. As our state is not favourably situated for commerce, & the University fixed in an interior part of the country you must readily conceive that the expense of clothing

will be something dearer at this place than at Princeton. But boarding is much cheaper, our diet at Commons is preferable to yours and procured at the low rate of 40 Dollars a year. The Trustees will pay for your boarding if you choose to diet at Commons. It has cost me nothing as yet. The buildings already compleated are one wing 98 feet long & 40 broad two stories high containing 16 rooms; an elegant & large house for the President, with out-houses; Steward's house, Kitchen &. The Buildings which are to be erected are a large house 115 feet long 56 broad & three stories; a wing exactly similar to the one above mentioned & placed fronting it; a chapel 50 feet long & 40 broad. I have annexed a small paper which will show you in what order these houses are to be arranged. The Chapel<sup>4</sup> is already contracted for, & will cost near 3,000 Dollars. The foundation will be laid within two weeks. The trustees can at pleasure realize 15,000 Dollars more with which they have determined to commence the large building as soon as they can procure an undertaker. It would be difficult to give any correct statement of the funds. I requested the Treasurer to make out a small account of them, which I purposed to inclose for your satisfaction. This I have not yet received but he assured me that they could not be stated at less than 30,000 Dollars, tho' some of the property was such as could not be immediately productive.<sup>5</sup>

I have now given you a short but I fear not satisfactory answer to your enquiries. From what I have said you will easily perceive that the University labours more at present for the want of good teachers than anything else. Were the buildings compleated and more of the professorships filled there would not be less than 200 students. The professorship of Mathematics is at present worth 500 Dollars & will I am certain in a short time be equal to 600. Yet I may inform you that the society in the neighbourhood of the University is very uncultivated & unenviting. I have no communication with it. When there is a little leisure I ride 12 or 14 miles & there find very agreeable company,<sup>6</sup> & the seminary is



occasionally visited by the most respectable gentlemen in the state. One who resides here will generally be confined to the company of teachers, students or books. Chapel Hill is 25 miles from Raleigh the seat of government. From the newness of the University every thing is rather in an unsettled state, but from present appearances I expect a situation here will within a short time become as agreeable & profitable as any of a like kind in the Union. You might here reasonably enquire why Mr. Ker has relinquished his business and why I intend to follow his example when prospects are so flattering. As to Mr. Ker he went away much against his own will,<sup>7</sup> and as to my self I never could think of spending my life in teaching or I should not alter my situation. The law is my aim, and it is now high time to make some effectual preparation in that way. I gave the trustees warning of my intention six months ago. After all I hope you will not rely too much on what I have said. I could not easily forgive myself should I be, even the innocent cause of persuading you to a situation which might on trial prove less agreeable than that which you at present hold. Consult with your friends in that country & if they should approve of the prospects which open to you from this state, accept of them.

You may calculate without diffidence on all the assistance which I can give you. Your letter I handed to the trustees who gave me liberty to inform you that you might be certain of the appointment should you think proper to accept. Gen. Davie of Hallifax, a leading member of the board, promised to write to you. We expect from London a small apparatus which will probably arrive before Christmas. Our education at Princeton was shamefully & inexcusably deficient in experimental Philosophy, a circumstance which I have often reflected upon with concern. If you have never attended particularly to that subject, before your commencement, you would undoubtedly find it a great advantage to see the Apparatus in Philadelphia & to learn the manner of using different kinds of Electrical Machines, Air-pump, Telescope, Microscope, Camera-Obscura, Magic Lantern,



Quadrants, Sextants, & whatever else you may suppose useful or entertaining. I should have appeared often very ridiculous in my own eyes had I not gotten a smattering of experimental Philosophy by visiting Williamsburgh College in Virginia.

I would thank you to make my respects acceptable to Dr. Smith, Dr. Minto, & Mr. Hobart, if it be not inconsistent with the subject of our correspondence. I would willingly receive the degree of A. M. if I should be thought worthy of it & it could be procured in my absence. I suppose there is some expense attending it, which if you defray I will remit by some opportunity, at any rate when our members return to congress.

If upon the whole you think of accepting our proposal you ought to arrive here between the end of October and the middle of November about which time the classes will again meet & you might at once enter upon your professorship. I am, sir, with all

possible respect your  
servant

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Mr. Joseph Caldwell.

Be kind enough to oblige me with a letter by Post as soon as possible after the reception of this. It would be highly pleasing to know something particular respecting the present situation of my Alma Mater. Direct to Chapel-Hill.

Chapel-Hill

26th July 96

Double

50.

MR. JOSEPH CALDWELL, *Tutor*,

at Princeton,

—— New Jersey. ——

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<sup>1</sup> The Trustees, on July 15, 1796, accepted Ker's resignation as presiding professor and promoted Harris to that office. Ker's chair of Rhetoric and Belle-Lettres went unfilled, as did also the chair of Chemistry. Harris assumed the duties of the chair of Natural Philosophy in addition to his own of Mathematics (he having been tutor in the last named subject from the beginning of his service in April, 1795, to the end of the first term in July,

since when he had occupied the professorship). Samuel Allen Holmes was promoted from the Grammar School to the chair of Languages and was assisted by W. L. Richards as tutor in English and French. Holmes' appointment later proved to be of very doubtful benefit to the Institution.

<sup>2</sup> Wm. R. Davie, the most influential member of the Board of Trustees, seems not to have been enthusiastic for McCorkle's appointment, and when the latter made his acceptance conditional upon an increase in salary equal to the annual rental value of the presiding professor's house (which he was to occupy, and whose duties he was to assume) in case he was deprived of the use of the house upon the election of a president, the board retracted the appointment. For further details relative to the failure of this appointment see Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, Vol. 1, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> W. L. Richards, Tutor in French and English, and Nicholas Delvaux, Tutor in Latin. Each of these also were teachers in the Grammar School.

<sup>4</sup> The Chapel was completed out of the funds of a donation by General Thomas Person, of Granville, and was named "Person Hall" in his honor. It was the east wing of the present building upon the campus still bearing the name of Person Hall.

<sup>5</sup> This property which could not be immediately productive consisted mainly of land warrants to Tennessee lands donated by Colonel Benjamin Smith (afterwards Governor) in 1790. Nothing was realized from them before 1815.

<sup>6</sup> Harris' outlet for social intercourse was Hillsborough, twelve miles distant.

<sup>7</sup> There seem to have been two reasons for the disseverance of Ker's connections with the University after a year and half of service: first, his inability to cope with the "unruly" spirit of the student body and, second, the fact that he had developed heterodox political and religious principles. The bulk of the young University's support, both in the Trustees and in the patronage, was Federalist politically and staunch Presbyterian in matters spiritual. Ker became a "furious Republican" and at the same time shook off his Presbyterian orthodoxy. After leaving the University he migrated to the territory of Mississippi and in 1802 was appointed a territorial judge by President Jefferson, in which office he served until his death in 1805.

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#### PART OF MR. CALDWELL'S LETTER <sup>1</sup>

"I showed our correspondence to Dr. Smith the day after I received your last letter. He read it and hesitated not to advise my acceptance. He is not well satisfied with his present situation, as he informed me before I left him. He looked at the plan chosen for the buildings on Chapel hill & went so far, as to say that he would be ready to relinquish his establishment & prospects here & remove to your University, if the trustees or those in whose power it should be, would give up the disposition and direction of affairs into his hands, the ordering of the buildings in their structure and situation, of the environs of the University, the choice of the Library &, &. He thought that by the additional expense of a few thousand dollars more than what the present

plan will require, the University might be made superior in elegance as well as convenience to any thing in our country. It is an undeniable truth that Dr. Smith is a man of superior cultivation and taste. These are so far from being superficial, that they are entirely of the solid and substantial kind. His reputation as a man of genius, of science, and of talents peculiarly fitted for instruction and discipline are too well known to you & to the people of the U. States to need any explanation. He has a family that must be expensive any where, but particularly in such a place as this; where the inhabitants with whom he is obliged to be in habits of ceremony, affect to be of what themselves would call the highest order. Being on a road which is travelled more than any other in the U. States, his disposition inclines him, and his situation obliges him to receive and entertain, with much expense, visitors at all times. It is by no means necessary for me to inform you that the inhabitants of this place were never agreeable to him nor he to them. As to his health, he declares that he is seriously apprehensive of the effects of the next winter upon it. He has filled the office of president with more mildness than he did that of vice president. The trustees of this place would certainly be very unwilling to part with him.

JOSEPH CALDWELL.

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<sup>1</sup> A copy, in Harris' hand, of Caldwell's reply to the preceding letter. It was appended by Harris to the succeeding letter to James Hogg, of Hillsborough, a member of the Trustee committee on appointments. It is to convey the information both of Caldwell's acceptance of the Chair of Mathematics and the possibility of the acceptance by Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, president of Princeton, of the presidency of the University of North Carolina should it be offered him. Reading between the lines, one may conclude that unsatisfactory conditions at Princeton at that date, coupled with the fair prospects of the future of the University of North Carolina, were greater in their influence upon Dr. Smith's attitude than the minor causes which Caldwell's letter discloses. However, for reasons probably financial in character, the chance of securing Dr. Smith was let slip by the Trustees, the negotiations never taking the actual form of an offer to him so far as the University records disclose.

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UNIVERSITY Sep. 1st 1796.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I now have the pleasure of informing you that Mr. Caldwell intends to accept of the professorship of Mathematics

at this place. I received his final answer by last Tuesday's post. He will set out on his journey in the first week of next month & will probably arrive about the first of November. I feel a secret pride in finding that the prospects of our national institution are so flattering, as to entice to it men of real abilities and merit; and you who are so entirely devoted to its interest cannot but rejoice that you have thus far been successful in establishing an University. I had communicated to Mr. Caldwell, agreeably to his request, a very particular, and as far as I was able, an accurate account of our affairs, and for his information had enclosed a small, rough plan of the intended situation of the buildings, avenues and walks, all which he shewed to Dr. Smith, and in his last letter had favoured me with the intelligence which I have transcribed into the annexed paper. Of it you are at liberty to make what use you think proper, as you are one of the Committee of correspondence and appointments. After you have perused the paper I beg leave to add the following remarks respecting Dr. Smith. He is as elegant and accurate a classical scholar as any professor in any of the Northern Colleges. He has devoted much time to the study of moral and political Philosophy & the philosophy of nature and we may judge of his progress in these, by some of his publications. He is well versed in Rhetoric & the Belles Lettres his style is said to be neat, & elegant. He is a standard of pronunciation, and his delivery is articulate, & pleasing, his gesture easy and engaging. In short he is possessed of many qualities of an Orator. His age is near fifty; he is rather above the common size & when I knew him, inclined to corpulency. He is universally thought handsome in his person & very polite in his manner. What Mr. Caldwell has related of the conversation between Dr. Smith & himself is in a loose, epistolary style; and the conditions mentioned cannot be supposed to be determinate. The whole I submit to you. For my own part if I know anything of Dr. Smith & the situation of this place I am certain, he would be more useful than any



man you could procure from Connecticut even Bishop Seabury himself.

As to our affairs at present, everything goes on in an ordinary way. The young gentlemen have not put us to the necessity of inflicting any high censures since the commencement of the session, but have applied themselves to their respective studies with much industry and regularity. Mr. Richards who assists in the preparatory school writes a very fine hand & by his method and attention promises to be an acquisition to the University in the way of writing. We expect to see you now & then if it be not inconvenient. Do me the honour of presenting my best respects to your family. I am sir, your most

humble servant

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Dr. James Hogg<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Gavin Oliver will much oblige me by making out a very small abstract of the state of the funds of the University. I spoke to him on that subject at our last examination.

JAMES HOGG, Esquire,  
Hillsborough.

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UNIVERSITY  
Sept. 5th. 1796

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received by last post your final answer on the subject of our correspondence—Your determination to accept of the professorship of Mathematics gives me great pleasure, and tho' you will find our institution in an infant state, yet such a foundation has been laid, and so great are the exertions on the part of the trustees, that I entertain scarce any doubts, but it will be brought to perfection in due time. I am sorry that Dr. Smith is not agreeably situated at Princeton. I had often mentioned his name to the trustees, but always supposed that no offers from this state could entice him from Nassau, particularly since he accepted the Presidency. I

wish our trustees could make a removal to the University agreeable and profitable to him; such an event I am certain would be highly useful to our growing institution. At any rate, I will make use of your letter to introduce proposals of that nature. I have already transmitted extracts of it to Gen. Davie of Halifax and Mr. Hogg of Hillsborough, they are leading trustees, and not unacquainted with Dr. Smith's literary character.

I would advise you to relinquish the idea of coming by water, it will be attended with many difficulties, and prevent you from seeing some of the best parts of the U. States. To travel by stage would cost 50 Dollars before you could arrive at Petersburg, 170 miles from this place. I think it the best plan to purchase a small but good horse and a single chair, you could with this equipage travel very conveniently and as expeditiously as on single horse. In your chair box you could carry many necessaries which you might need before the arrival of your trunk. This plan you may make as cheap as you please and keeping the post road through the city of Washington, Alexandria, near Mt. Vernon, Richmond, Petersburg, &c. you would find much entertainment and improve your knowledge of the Geography of our country & without doubt it would be very serviceable to your health. The less in the price of the horse could not be considerable, and I would take the chair off your hands. A half-worn chair, if well made, would answer your purpose & be much cheaper. You would save something considerable by filling your trunk with one or two pieces of linen, stockings, shoes, broadcloth and whatever articles of clothing you would need in the course of a year all which are much dearer here than in Philadelphia & sometimes not easily procured.

Your trunks may be addressed to Petersburg as on the annexed paper, where they will be received, and cost of shipping paid by Mr. Grain & Anderson, who will forward them on to Hillsborough immediately, they will receive directions to this purpose long before your trunks can arrive. If no ship for

that place should sail while you are at Philadelphia, Mr. Otto can superintend that business.

I wish to order about 100 Dollars worth of books from Robert Campbell, Bookseller in the city. This I shall do before you set out. You would oblige me by putting them in the same line of conveyance with your trunks & with the same address. I will write to Mr. Otto on the subject, from whom you will receive further accounts. Give my best respects to Dr. Minto, Dr. Smith & Mr. Hobart. I am, sir, with sincerity

Your friend,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Mr. Joseph Caldwell.

Chapel Hill  
6th Sept. 1796

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MR. JOSEPH CALDWELL,  
Princeton,  
New Jersey.

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November 18th 1796.

DEAR SON.

About this time I thought to have been with you, but the State of my business is such that I cannot be so long from home without suffering some of my purposes to mis-ary. I herewith send you some business<sup>1</sup> that I hope you will transact for me at the Assembly you will find the ground work of it in two papers I send you with this. Some time after Gen. Davidson fell in the defence of the country, the General Assembly willing to do his heirs what Justice they could undertook to settle his Military claims themselves and allowed his heirs the sum of Seven hundred and thirty six pounds Seven shillings for his Services to the United States, and another sum of two hundred and ninety seven pounds from the State of N. Carolina.

After some time the heirs of the decd alledged themselves injured both in the Quality and the Quantity of the allowance made for the services done to the United States, in order to do themselves justice the heirs with the advice and assistance of their friends returned all the pay they had received from the State No. Carolina in order that they might be entitled to have their accounts settled on the same principles other continental officers had and recieve hard cash in lieu of depreciated paper money. The Agent who transacted this business through mistake or ignorance returned the two hundred and ninety seven pounds that had been paid for Militia services together with the allowance that had been made for Continental services you will find from the papers I send you that one thousand and thirty three pounds includes the allowance for both Continental and Militia Services which appears to be all the heirs ever received from North Carolina. To make you to understand the nature of the claim I will state some facts

*First* The allowance made to the heirs of Gen. Davidson by the State of North Carolina was not sufficient when the his account was justly settled in Philadelphia by near three hundred pounds.

*Second* The whole of the pay the heirs ever received from North Carolina was paid back including Militia Services.

*Third* If the heirs of Gen. Davidson had paid back no more than the allowance made them for his Continental Services they would be Intitled to A settlement with the United States.

*Fourthly* The State of North Carolina never refunded that allowance of two hundred and Ninety seven pounds that was made to them for his Militia Services though it was returned into the Treasurers office through ignorance or mistake of the Agent.

From which I infer that Sum of two hundred and Ninety



Seven pounds is yet due from the State of North Carolina to the heirs of Gen. Davidson.

DR. CHARLEY

Your prudence will direct you who to apply to for assistance in bringing forward this Claim Mr. Lock who was one of the engrossing clerks was very helpful to me before in this business Mr. Craven<sup>2</sup> who is Comtrouler can give you the [illegible] respecting this of any person I can Direct you to.

I would be glad you could make it convenient to go to Raleigh with John Davidson<sup>3</sup> who is the bearer of this it is easier doing business of this sort early in the session than towards the last when the members are confused and anxious about their different Interests and caprices any expense you will be at on account of this will be replaced to you. If you succeed in this give the money to Col Phifer<sup>4</sup> or bring it with you when you come home. I am with affection

Yr. Father

ROBT. HARRIS.

Mr. Charles W. Harris.

N. B. Remember me to Bob<sup>5</sup> I hope to see him about New Year.

Before you put in your memorial enquire whether it would be better to petition for the certifiycates that was Returned or Money to the amount.

Addressed:

MR. CHARLES HARRIS  
Chapel Hill.

Endorsed:

GEN. DAVIDSON.

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<sup>1</sup> This letter, the only one of the series written by the father of Charles Wilson Harris, was made available by the courtesy of Mr. R. D. W. Connor, Secretary of the North Carolina Historical Commission. Robert Harris' connection with the military claims of the Davidson heirs was due to his marriage with Mrs. Davidson several years after the death of her husband, General William Lee Davidson, in the battle of Cowan's Ford, 1781. William Lee Davidson, of Mecklenburg county, was Major in the fourth of the six regi-

ments raised by North Carolina in 1775 and early 1776 and tendered to Congress for service in the common defense of the country. These troops were taken into the Continental service by Congress on the 7th May, 1775, their officers being duly confirmed. They were marched to the North under General Francis Nash to reinforce the Army of Washington. After arduous service of three years under Washington the remainder of these troops were sent South, Nov., 1779, to reinforce General Benjamin Lincoln in South Carolina. In the meantime Davidson had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel. Passing through North Carolina he obtained leave to visit his family. When his furlough was about to expire he attempted to rejoin his regiment at Charleston, but found the city so closely beleaguered by the British that it was impossible to do so. When Charleston capitulated, in May, 1780, Davidson's regiment became prisoners of war, thus leaving him without a command. Thereupon he returned to North Carolina and raised in Mecklenburg and adjoining counties a volunteer corps for the purpose of overthrowing the Tories of the back country, who had become particularly aggressive since Lincoln's capitulation at Charleston. He was engaged in this service until General Horatio Gates' defeat on the 16th August, at Camden. In this battle Griffith Rutherford, brigadier-general of North Carolina militia in the Salisbury District, was taken prisoner. The North Carolina Board of War temporarily assigned Henry William Harrington to Rutherford's post and on the 31st August the legislature appointed Davidson to the command as brigadier-general until such time as Rutherford should be released. General Davidson does not appear to have assumed active command in the district until the 1st of January, 1781, at which date he resigned as lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army. One month later, February 1, he was killed at Cowan's Ford, on the Catawba, where he had posted his forces at General Nathaniel Greene's order to oppose the crossing of Cornwallis' Army. Hence arose the claim of his heirs, upon both the United States and the State of North Carolina. Their claims against the United States were under the terms of a resolution of Congress of the 24th August, 1780, which granted half-pay for seven years to the officers of the army who should continue in the service to the end of the war, or to the widows, or orphans of those who should die in the service, to commence from the time of such officer's death. The settlement of both claims by the State of North Carolina was rejected, as noted in the letter. Then the state adjusted the claim for militia service alone, the claim against the United States continuing until finally settled by the 34th Congress, January 1, 1857. The reason for the long delay rested in the fact that Davidson's death did not occur while in the Continental Army and hence, technically, his heirs had no claim under the resolution of Congress of 1780. The settlement of 1857 was therefore an act of grace.

<sup>2</sup> John Craven, of Halifax, State Comptroller from 1784 to 1808.

<sup>3</sup> Third son of General William Lee Davidson. The other Davidson heirs were: George, William Lee, Ephraim, Parmela, and Margaret.

<sup>4</sup> Caleb Phifer, born at "Cold Water," Cabarrus county (then a part of Anson) April 8, 1749; died July 3, 1811. He represented Mecklenburg in the lower branch of the state legislature from 1778 to 1792; one term excepted, that of 1790. His portion of Mecklenburg being erected into Cabarrus in 1792 he became its first state senator in 1793 and served continuously to 1801. His title of "Colonel" appears to have been a courtesy title, or else confused with that of his brother John, who was major, and lieutenant colonel in the war of the Revolution.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Wilson Harris, son of the writer, and a student in the University. See earlier note.

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HILLSBORO, April 11, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I have arrived safe at this place and attended the business of the court for one day, but have not gone to the Uni-

versity.<sup>1</sup> The political opinions<sup>2</sup> run strongly against the French who are without reserve called a pack of damn'd villains, the same prevails over all the lower parts of the state with but few solitary exceptions. The relations given by Captains and sailors from the West Indies who have been robbed of everything and have experienced personal insults added to injury have much excited the passions of the people. Mr. Hogg<sup>3</sup> is just from Wilmington and says that the sailors have attempted to raise a mob and drive off the French frigate that now lies in that place, as it is considered very hard that they should lie and furnish themselves in our ports,<sup>4</sup> then sail out and take all our vessels without discrimination. Mr. Hogg attended the play at Wilmington for two evenings where great numbers were present of all classes. In the interludes the company was entertained with music, when the French patriotic tunes were called for, they were incessantly hissed, and the musicians obliged to cease. At one time *God Save the King* was called, a little hissing was heard but the other party drowned it with a general and loud applause. This will serve to show the great change in the minds of the people. Several gentlemen are in town who say they have seen a proclamation of the present president<sup>5</sup> calling a Congress to meet on the last of the month. We do not altogether believe the account as the gentlemen express some doubt respecting the authenticity of the publication. Mrs. Kirkland of whom we were conversing is now on the recovery. Please present my respects to Aunt Sally and am yours,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Dr. Charles Harris, Esquire.  
Cabarrus.

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was written by Harris at Hillsboro while on his way from Cabarrus to Halifax, where he proposed to take up the pursuit of the law in General Davie's office. He had ended his connection with the University the previous December, his duties as administrative officer of the institution temporarily resting in the hands of Caldwell until James Smiley Gillespie was chosen by the Trustees as principal of the University in December, 1797.

<sup>2</sup> In reference to the all-absorbing question of the European struggle and the relation of our infant republic thereto. North Carolina opinion during the early phases of the French Revolution had been strongly pro-French, but

with the excesses of the "Terror" fresh in mind, and France's persistent efforts to involve the United States in the struggle on her side, together with her rejection, February, 1797, of Charles C. Pinckney as our accredited representative, public opinion in the state veered around and was now running strongly against France.

<sup>3</sup> Either James Hogg, merchant of Wilmington, Fayetteville, and Hillsboro, or his son John Hogg. The elder Hogg was one of the strongest supporters of the recently founded state University, being perhaps second only to Davie in his usefulness to its interests. A trustee from 1789 to 1802, he attended all meetings of that body, frequently visited the institution, was a member of the Trustee committee on appointments, and a member of the committee that selected a device for a seal. His son, John Hogg, was a partner with his father in business and a member from Orange in the lower branch of the state legislature in 1794 and 1796.

<sup>4</sup> Our treaty of alliance with France in 1778 provided that the French might bring their prizes into our ports and that enemies of France might not fit out privateers in the said ports. Genet, French republican minister in 1793, had interpreted this to imply that French prizes might not only be brought in, but sold also, and that France under the treaty possessed the right to fit out privateers in our harbors. Washington and his cabinet interpreted the treaty to mean that France might fit out such privateers, but not use our ports as a base for their operations against her enemy. Also the right to sell in our ports prizes taken at sea was denied. Hence the situation as complained of above: French privateers fitted out in our ports and then lay off the same ports for the capture of our vessels claimed to be carrying contraband.

<sup>5</sup> President John Adams, inaugurated March 4, 1794. Despite our strained relations with France he did not call the extra session of Congress suggested above.

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HALIFAX, May 8th, 1797.

DEAR UNCLE:

I have arrived safe at this place and find myself pretty well fixed for study, tho surrounded on all sides with a great variety of amusements, in every respect calculated to engage the attention of one in the vigor of youth. I spent a few evenings in forming an acquaintance in some of the neighbouring families, but generally was busily occupied with the affairs of court, as I enlisted at once into the drudgery of General Davie's office, at present I feel a little relieved for court rose on yesterday evening. Every one here is much agitated by the near approach of a cock-fight which begins on this afternoon. There have been several pack-fights but none so decisive as to enable us to guess what will be the fate of the general engagement.<sup>1</sup> The gentlemen in town fight against those of the country, otherwise it is the Longs against the Alstons. Tho know my purse is not much interested in the affair, yet as an inhabitant of the town I hope the event will be favorable to the town party. But Hodge without



doubt will announce to you in his journal the issue of so important a conflict.

The most renowned Dr. Perkins<sup>2</sup> left town yesterday. He has been operating for a week past upon the sick and the lame, the deaf and the dumb, and blind in this neighborhood. Some assert that all the miracles mentioned in the gospels have been wrought anew. Others are infidels. However, none complains of his charges for he labored without money and without price. I had not the pleasure of hearing much of the doctor's conversation and should I judge from his appearance, I would conclude, that if there be anything uncommon in his points, that the discovery was made like all other great discoveries—by accident. He is about fifty five or sixty years old, considerably above the common size, his eyebrows remarkably large and heavy, his nose, lips, and chin denote rather the fatness of his head than the sprightliness of his genius. He seems as if he had been more accustomed to sleeping and eating than studying or making discoveries, or as if he had oftener drunk from a tun of beer, than sipped from Helicon's fountain.

I am, dear sir, your friend and servant,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris,  
Cabarrus.

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<sup>1</sup> Evidently reference to local politics and local political leaders. There were numerous Longs and Alstons in the town and county of Halifax at this date. Halifax was one of the seven borough towns in the state with the right of separate representation in the lower house. Richard H. Long represented the town in 1792, 1798, 1799, and 1800. Willis Alston was one of the county representatives, either in the house or senate, from 1790 to 1795. Elected to Congress in 1799 he served until 1815, and again from 1825 to 1831. He was a Republican in politics and Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee during the war of 1812.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Dr. Elisha Perkins, of Connecticut, who in 1798 patented certain "magnetic tractors" for the cure of various human ills. These "tractors" were compass-like affairs, with one blunt pointed and one sharp-pointed arm, made of combinations of copper, zinc, and gold, or iron, silver, and platinum. Cures were effected by stroking, and their principle of action was supposed to be analogous to that of galvanism or animal magnetism. The "tractors" of Dr. Perkins had a remarkable vogue in England as well as in this country in the early 19th century.

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HALIFAX, July.

MY DEAR BROTHER,<sup>1</sup>

It is with pleasure that I learn from your letter the

progress you have made in the studies of college, as also in your private reading—the only thing you have to attend to, is that you read no more than you are able to digest properly. By now reflecting upon what you have read it will be easier to discover whether you read with due attention. Suppose I were to ask you from Anson's voyage<sup>2</sup> what was the object of his expedition? Why did he fail in a great measure? What part of his conduct shows most clearly his courage? his perseverance, or his humanity? What is the feudal system? How introduced into England? When was the present form of Government established? Whether was Charles I or his parliament most to blame in the civil wars? By making a few simple questions of this kind you will readily discover your strength.

I am not surprised that you should have the mumps, when they are so generally prevalent. As you had the small-pox when a child you need not fear them—a circumstance with which perhaps you are unacquainted.

You will in July probably have a short vacation and may be inclined to visit Hillsborough. I owe Mrs. Estis ten dollars for a bed which I have heretofore neglected to pay. You would oblige me by calling upon her and discharging the debt, also make an apology for the tardy payment. I will write to Mr. Richards<sup>3</sup> and request him to give you money for that purpose.

You are desirous that I would send a description of the spinning machine. This I could not do without making a rough plan upon paper, which will require some time. When I have time I shall take pleasure in satisfying your curiosity.

I have heard nothing of my horse. Please let me know how he comes on.<sup>4</sup> You can write by Dr. Hall<sup>5</sup> or others of this town who will be at your examination.

I am, dear sir, with affection,

Your brother,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert Harris.  
University.

<sup>1</sup>Robert Wilson Harris, younger and only brother of Charles Wilson Harris, was born in 1779 at Ragton, his fathers' home upon the "Mill Grove Tract" in the Poplar Tent district, Cabarrus. He entered the University during its second session, which began in August, 1795. He seems to have remained a student there until sometime in November, 1797. From this date he remained with his father in Cabarrus until about February, 1799, at which time he undertook a mercantile career at Salisbury. In 1801 he set up a mercantile business at Sneedsboro, on the Pedee River, in Anson county, and here remained until his death in 1812.

<sup>2</sup>The book to which Harris here refers was published in London, 1784, by John and Paul Knapton, with the title page as follows: "A Voyage round the World in the Years 1740-1744, By George Anson, Esq., Commander in Chief of His Majesty's ships sent upon an expedition to the South Seas. Compiled from papers and other materials of the Right Honorable George Lord Anson, and published under his Direction. By Richard Walter." It was during the "War of Jenkins Ear," between England and Spain, 1739-42, that Anson, with six ships set out for the Pacific by way of Cape Horn. He plundered the Spanish ports and shipping up the whole west coast of South America, captured Spanish treasure to the amount of 500,000 pounds in gold, crossed to the Philippines, plundered these, and returned to England around Africa. His exploits during this memorable voyage recalled to the English navy the old glories of Drake and the other sea captains of the Elizabethan Era.

<sup>3</sup>William Augustus Richards, teacher in the Grammar School and tutor in the University in English, French, and sometimes German from 1796 to his death in 1798. Richards was an Englishman of varied attainments and experiences. He had seen service both in the English navy and the merchant marine. In America he had become a strolling player, his troupe becoming stranded at Warrenton, North Carolina, whereupon he secured employment as a teacher in the "Academy" of that place. He showed such proficiency in this role that, falling under the observation of certain members of the University's board of Trustees, he was procured for the work at the University as above stated. Here, in an exemplary manner, he justified the confidence of his sponsors and acquired that of everyone connected with the institution. During a part of his service Richards acted as Treasurer of the University, a chief duty of the office at this period being to serve as repository of the funds for students and to pay out the same upon order from parents and guardians.

<sup>4</sup>Horse probably left by Harris at Chapel Hill upon his retirement from service at the University. It was likely now at the use of his brother, or awaiting sale. The ownership of a horse for riding was at this date a necessity in North Carolina to every lawyer, preacher, practitioner, teacher, and all others whose interests required any degree of travel. Population was yet too sparse, and roads too undeveloped to justify stage-coach lines west of Warrenton. The luxurious traveler sometimes used a "chair," or two-wheeled, one-seated vehicle known to the present generation as the "sulky" or "dog-cart;" but the average traveler went on horse-back.

<sup>5</sup>Probably Reverend James Hall, D. D. (Princeton and the University of North Carolina), who as Synod Missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the Carolinas at this date, was an untiring traveler throughout North Carolina and adjoining states. Dr. Hall was born and reared in Iredell county (then a part of Rowan). He graduated at Princeton in 1774 and at once entered the ministry in his native region. At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1775 he became an ardent patriot and an inspiration to the cause of independence. In 1779 he became captain to a volunteer company of cavalry organized in his district and, a little later, chaplain of the regiment into which his company was integrated. In this double capacity of chaplain and captain he did yeoman service against Cornwallis' invasion, 1780-81. After the war he resumed his ministry with great vigor and effectiveness. Dr. Hall was greatly interested in the fortunes of the State University, frequently visited it, and was an early donor of books to its library. He died in 1826 at the ripe age of eighty-two years. For a full sketch of this remarkable man, see Foote's Sketches of North Carolina, Chapter 24.



HALIFAX, July 8, '97.

DEAR BROTHER:

Inclosed I send an unsealed letter to Mrs. Estis, hoping you will read and seal it before you deliver it to Mrs. Estis.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Richards will give you the money when you demand it. Please settle the account when you next go to Hillsborough.

I am your brother,

Mr. Robert Harris,  
University.

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

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<sup>1</sup>This business matter with Mrs. Estis, of Hillsboro, is explained in the previous letter above.

HALIFAX, Aug. 26th, 1797.

DEAR UNCLE,

I venture still upon a stay in this sickly country. So much is to be performed in the way of study before a man can enter (with any prospects of success), upon the practice of law,<sup>1</sup> that I am induced to prolong my opportunities of improvement at this place, and if one or two lawyers who now plead in the neighbouring counties should die or decline business, probably I might make my first attempts in Halifax district. I have some distant hope that Blake Baker<sup>2</sup> will be promoted to the bench by the next Assembly. I shall not fix myself before that period.

You perhaps have heard that Dr. Perkins, for his great skill in metallics, has been expelled from the Medical Society in Massachusetts, a doctor in New York not long since published a very rational piece on these extraordinary points. He admits that they indubitably have their effect in several instances but not to the extent which Dr. P. has alleged. He admits no operation of electricity or magnetism, as many scribblers on the subject have supposed, and accounts for their power by the tickling and pleasing titulation which their application to the skin may occasion, this being a sensation so opposite to a pain in the muscular parts, that the latter often is overcome and a spasm or constriction may be removed. Of course an ivory toothpick or a tickling straw may be as useful as Brass and Iron.



Inclosed I send a letter to Mr. Edwin Reese respecting a vacancy in the University which may be at his choice. I hope you will forward it by post if not better nor more ready conveyance offers. If I have mistaken his address be so kind as to correct it. My best respects to Aunt Sally. I hope you will long enjoy uninterrupted health and be the means of bestowing the same blessing on a great number of patients.

I am, sir, with respect yours,

CHAS. W. HARRIS.

Doctor Charles Harris.

Cabarrus.

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<sup>1</sup> Harris was now reading law under the supervision of General Wm. R. Davie and at the same time assisting Davie in the office end of his work. He procured his license to practice in 1798, and in 1799 assumed the whole burden of Davie's practice when the latter became Commissioner to France.

<sup>2</sup> Blake Baker was a native of Warren County. He was Attorney-General of North Carolina from 1795 to 1802. In 1807 he represented Warren county in the state legislature. In 1808 he was appointed by Governor David Stone one of the judges of Superior Court. He was a violent Republican partizan from about 1799 to the date of his death, 1818.

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HALIFAX, Sept. 22, 1797.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

It is so long since I received a letter from you that I am entirely unacquainted with your progress in your studies. I hear a good report, in general, of the University, and I flatter myself that your industry and talents keep you from being ranked among the dullest of your fellow students. In the letter which I have received from you, there is a uniform silence respecting your plan for life. You are now seventeen years of age and must know that much depends upon your own exertions and your own plans; and whatever deference you may be disposed to pay to the advice of friends I can hardly be persuaded to believe that you will entirely submit to their direction and disposition, without so much as exercising your own choice. Whatever that choice may be, you ought to make it known, that your friends may assist you in bringing it into operation. In conversation you have informed me that you had a predilection for merchandise, it is probable that you still continue in the same mind. In con-

sequence of what you then said I have ever since been enquiring for an eligible situation, in that line, for a beginner. But previously having mentioned the subject to your father, he neither approving nor disapproving in direct terms, I took it for granted that he would find no difficulty in consenting to anything which would apparently promote your interest. Tho' my ignorance of the minutia of trade may render it impossible for me to particularize the qualifications necessary for one about to enter the business, yet I am certain that, industry and frugality, steady perseverance, honesty and punctuality are essential in a mercantile character and I hope that in these you would not be found deficient. A good and accurate knowledge of accounts and an *easy business hand* are not matters of small consequence. When I last had the pleasure of seeing you I particularly requested you to make all possible improvements in Book-keeping and writing. I hope you have not neglected them. Your last letters were written something better than usual, but there is great room for improvement.

I have now in view a merchant of my acquaintance to whom I have mentioned you, he carries on business very extensively and is still wishing to extend it farther. He owns several vessels, three of which are now at sea, one on a voyage to London, the others to West Indies. He may have use for such a person as you. I will know the particulars before my return, and if the prospect is good I shall make conditional proposals to him in your behalf. In the meantime, let me hear from you and also from home if you have received any late accounts. I have received but one letter from my father since I left the back country. I am with respect and affection, Dear Sir,

Your brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Present my respects to the Gentlemen of the University.

Mr. Robert Harris.  
University.

HALIFAX, Oct. 29th, 1797.

DEAR BROTHER,

I received your letter in answer to mine respecting your intention of entering into merchandise and am happy to find that you agree with me upon that subject. You mention a plan which you had formed of improving the farm on Rocky River. That would, at best, be confining your exertions to a very small sphere. Your father's farm which he has always designed for you, is very much cut down, and taking into calculation the mills and stills, cannot be very productive, besides it lies in a distant and retired part of the country where fortune would rarely throw bars of gold into your lap. She deals out her favors in busier and more crowded countries.

One of Mr. Drew's<sup>1</sup> Brigs has arrived from the West Indies. His ship the *Poll Carey* got safe to London, is now daily expected at Edenton, and must soon arrive, unless the savage Sans cullottes<sup>2</sup> be kind enough to pilot her into some of the Republican ports.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Drew is now in Halifax. I have spoken to him respecting you, and from your character he appears desirous of having you with him as soon as possible. Especially if the *Poll Carey* makes her port. The employment he will give you is of the most extensive kind. You would stay in a store in Halifax until the spring, when his vessels sail, he says you shall go Supercargo to Havana or to London or some other place in Europe. He expects that you will not refuse to attend to his business in any part of the world wherever his interest may lie, and it may at times be necessary for you to remain in London or elsewhere six months or more to transact his concerns. What he will allow you I have not, nor shall not enquire; industry, honesty and abilities will not go unrewarded. This much I have been able to do for you, it is but trifling; the burthen of any man's interest must rest upon himself. I hope you are employing every moment of leisure time in writing, accounts, etc. In pursuing this plan, as it requires that you should be at a distance from home, you must consider the feelings of your

father, who always has been particularly attached to you. His hearty consent you must endeavor to obtain. This is the more necessary because he has none of his children with him, is now less able to attend to the more active and laborious part of his business. I will be at the University by the 14th of Nov. when I shall converse with you further on the subject of this letter. In the meantime do as your friends would wish, and may you prosper.

I am, your brother, with affection,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert Harris.  
University,  
N. Carolina.

I have taken Superior court license and shall return to this place after Christmas. Perhaps you will come with me.

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<sup>1</sup> John and Williams Drew were merchants and traders at Halifax and Edenton, doing a general carrying trade and export business. In 1793-94 they gave, respectively, 64 and 10 dollars upon subscription to the University. Evidently, as suggested in a previous letter, Charles W. Harris had secured the offer of an apprenticeship for his brother, Robert, with the Drew mercantile interests.

<sup>2</sup> Breechless fellows, a name of reproach given by the aristocrats at the time of the French Revolution to one belonging to the extreme republican party, the members of which had rejected short breeches, an article of dress peculiar to the upper class, and had adopted pantaloons.

3. France in 1797 was openly preying upon our trade under color of contraband laws and English precedent, to which the infant United States had submitted. In reality France's Republican Government (The Directory at this time) was actuated by resentment at our interpretation of our treaty with France (made 1778), and by the profits accruing from plundering a nation clearly too weak to resist. Our Commissioners, Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry were this very month (Oct., 1797) in Paris trying to open negotiations with the corrupt Directory to close up all causes of tension between France and America. Their efforts ended in the "X. Y. Z." incident, and a burst of indignation throughout America.

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HALIFAX, November 12th, 1797.

DEAR BROTHER,

The alteration which has taken place in my plans since I last wrote to you has made it necessary for me to defer my journey to the back [country] for ten days longer than I had at first intended. Court in Nash county begins on tomorrow, in Halifax next week. I must attend to them before I set



out. I hope you have provided a horse and everything necessary to go to Cabarrus<sup>1</sup> immediately after the examinations. Take care of the letter I last wrote to you respecting your prospects in the mercantile line, and show it to your father when you introduce a conversation with him on that subject, if you think proper to consult him before I arrive in Cabarrus, which will be about the 30th of November. Mr. Drew's ship *Poll Carey* has not yet come to port.

As I shall have a great number of books to bring from the back country<sup>2</sup> on my return to Halifax, I would be willing that such as are at the University should be conveyed by some of the young gentlemen of this place when they come home. I have written to Mr. Geo. Long requesting him to contrive the matter. I now scarcely recollect what books of mine are at Chapel Hill—Anson's Voyage, Tooke's Pantheon,<sup>3</sup> and my large Atlas, or book of Maps are among the number. Mr. Bingham<sup>4</sup> of Chatham borrowed my Atlas perhaps he has returned it before this time. If not, and Mr. Long<sup>5</sup> will be kind enough to undertake to convey it, I hope you will send to Mr. Bingham for it. My horse is on the spot and you could hire a boy for a dollar. It would be but the journey of a day. But whoever goes for it ought to be directed to secure it well against wearing and tearing; a wetting would ruin the book entirely—therefore that also should be guarded against.

Mr. Richards<sup>6</sup> owes me a balance of \$26.00, I requested him to pay the same to you. I beg, therefore, that you would be so kind as to receive it and pay it immediately to Mr. Holmes<sup>7</sup>—to whom I am indebted, but if Mr. Richards should not pay it or any circumstance turn up contrary to my expectations so that the money cannot be paid to Mr. Holmes, I hope you will mention it to him as I have informed him that you would pay the money. Pleasant Hall<sup>8</sup> is to ride my horse to Halifax. You will give any assistance in your power in fixing him up for his journey. Perhaps the horse may require new shoes or some repairing about his feet.

Please to have my bed clothes and other articles in my trunk well aired and and the whole secured in the possession of some careful person before you leave Chapel Hill. Write to me by the young Gentlemen who return to Halifax. Give my respects to Mr. Springs,<sup>9</sup> Frank Burton,<sup>10</sup> Houston,<sup>11</sup> and Mr. Osborne,<sup>12</sup> Dixon,<sup>13</sup> and others. I am, dear brother,

Yours affectionately,

Mr. Robert Harris.  
University.

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

<sup>1</sup> Ragton, the Harris home on Rocky River, was seven miles distant to the west of the present town of Concord, county-seat of Cabarrus. It was originally in Anson county; then in Mecklenburg, cut off from Anson in 1762. After 1792 it was in Cabarrus, cut off in that year from Mecklenburg.

<sup>2</sup> "The back country" was a common phrase in the South throughout colonial times and up to about 1820, being used alike in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, to denote the less populous interior or Piedmont regions in contra-distinction to the seaboard area.

<sup>3</sup> "The Pantheon," representing the "Fabulous Histories of the Heathen Gods, and Most Illustrious Heroes, in a Plain and Familiar Method, by way of Dialogue," by Andrew Tooke, M. A. Tooke was born in London in 1673 and died in 1731. His book was an exceedingly popular work among eighteenth century scholars, the twenty-ninth edition of it being published in London in 1793.

<sup>4</sup> Evidently William Bingham the first (reverend), an honor graduate of Glasgow University, Scotland. He immigrated to America about 1788; for a short time he preached at Wilmington, North Carolina, and established a classical school there. In 1795 he removed his school to Pittsboro, in Chatham county. From 1801 to 1805 he was professor of Ancient Languages in the State University, resigning in the latter year to reopen his school at Pittsboro. In 1808 he removed his school to Hillsboro, and a little later to a plantation he had purchased near the present site of Mebane. The present Bingham School at Mebane is in direct descent from the first William Bingham's log school-house near that place.

<sup>5</sup> George Washington Long, of Halifax, entered the University in 1795 and graduated in 1799. He was one of the organizers of the Concord Society (later the Philanthropic Literary) in 1795 and is recorded as its first debater, the query being: "Which is best,—An Education or a Fortune," the supporters of education winning the decision.

<sup>6</sup> William Augustus Richards, tutor in the University. See above.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Holmes, professor of languages in the University from 1796 to 1798. Holmes was not in high favor with his colleagues at the University and seems to have been a disturbing element in the period of his service there. See Battle's History of the University, Vol. I, pp. 156, *et seq.*

<sup>8</sup> William Pleasant Hall, of Halifax, graduate of the University in 1803. and member of the House of Commons for the town of Halifax in 1808.

<sup>9</sup> Adam A. Springs, of Mecklenburg, one of the seven who made up the first graduating class of the University (1798).

<sup>10</sup> Francis Nash Williams Burton, of Granville, A. B. University of North Carolina, 1799.

<sup>11</sup> William Houston, of Iredell, A. B. University of North Carolina, 1798. Physician.

<sup>12</sup> Either Alexander Osborne, or Edwin J. Osborne, brothers, of Rowan, A. B. graduates of the University of North Carolina in 1798.

<sup>13</sup> The editor is unable to discover the identity of this person. He was not a member of any of the classes at the University of near date.

Nov. 27th, 1797.

DEAR BROTHER,

I am happy to understand that you were lucky enough to procure a horse for your journey home. I shall be with you at farthest, within ten days after you receive this letter. I need not inform you that the disappointment in not receiving my horse detained me longer than I expected. I now write to inform you that we have just heard that the Poll Carey has arrived at the bar and is probably before this time safely moored at Edenton. She made a very lucky voyage and among other things has brought in dry goods to the amount of 13,000 pounds sterling. Mr. Drew,<sup>1</sup> from what he has heard of your character, is very desirous of employing you in his service, and has lately urged me to use my interest in procuring your consent, and the consent of your father to engage in his business. He wants the assistance of some person immediately. He has had several applications but has agreed to engage with no one until he heard from you. I have always told you to consult with your father and procure his entire approbation was the first step. I make no doubt but you have disclosed the matter to him and heard his opinion. Give me leave to observe that I conceive it highly necessary that every young man should learn some business or some trade which would be attached to his person, and give him an intrinsical worth, independent of his circumstances as to property or family. But such an acquisition cannot be made without some inconvenience, without the sacrifice of a person's pleasures for a time. If you study physic you must serve an apprenticeship in beating at the mortar and rolling pills. If law, you must copy lengthy Bills, answers, etc. You must set Richard Roe and John Doe (poor innocent names) to eject, assault, batter and misuse each other and then bring them to justice against their wills. If merchandise, you must sweep up the storehouse, weigh sugar, measure salt, write a great deal and stand constantly behind the counter for a long time before you will be able to earn your bread. I mention not these difficulties to discourage. I hope

you have more firmness than to turn your back on trifling obstacles. Now, if your father consents, you ought, without delay, to procure some decent clothing, at least one suit, if you succeed, as I hope you would. It would be the last expense to your father. If you come at all, you should immediately. Determine soon; remember that what I have to communicate to you shall be suppress until I see you in Cabarrus.

My best wishes,  
my dear brother  
shall always attend you.

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert Harris,  
Cabarrus.

Give my affection to my father and show him my letters to you on this subject. My love to my step-mother.<sup>2</sup>

Nov. 27th, 1797.

(Gen. Smith<sup>3</sup> will much oblige his humble servant Chas. Harris by giving this letter the first opportunity of a conveyance).

<sup>1</sup> Merchant of Halifax and Edenton, with whom Harris was endeavoring to place his brother Robert for an apprenticeship in business. See above.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Harris, the elder, married as his second wife the widow of General William Davidson, killed Feb. 1st, 1781, at the battle of Cowan's Ford in his efforts, with the badly organized state militia, to hamper Cornwallis' crossing the Catawba River.

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Smith, soldier, statesman, and philanthropist. One of the first trustees of the University of North Carolina. Donor in 1790 of 20,000 acres of Tennessee land to the institution about to be founded. He was for fifteen years a member of the state Legislature (senate) from Brunswick county. He was governor in 1810. Smith Hall, at the University, now used as the Law Building, was named in his honor. He died at Smithville, Columbus county, February 10th, 1829.

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HALIFAX, Nov. 7, 1798.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

If you are engaged in merchandise, you must certainly have a South-Sea-scheme in view,—if in Chemistry, you are pursuing the discovery of the Philosopher's stone, if in Astronomy, you are searching for Mercury's Moons, and if in Mechanics, then you must be beating your brain for the perpetual motion. If not engaged in the one or the other of the above mentioned pursuits, how comes it to pass, that



the weekly post bears on its wings not a single line from the airy hills of old Ragton, where you breathe such healthy lively air? Methinks your imagination would constantly teem with images and your brain be crowded with ideas. And if so, why not impart them to me? I only console myself in this way that in all events you will not permit yourself to be unemployed, and that when not engaged in writing to me that you are more usefully engaged in business of importance.

I observe in a passage in Cousin William's<sup>1</sup> last letter that you and he intend to give me a visit in January. I shall be happy at all times and places to see you. A complete suit of broadcloth at that season will be both fashionable and comfortable. If Oscar<sup>2</sup> has not been sent by Mr. Allison<sup>3</sup> to the Assembly, you probably design to bring him in January. In that case I would only observe that you must bring another to ride back and not depend upon my little bay as I have already sold him to be delivered when I receive Oscar.

I am very desirous to know how your intended storehouse progresses, and what plans you have lately formed for the purpose of replenishing it,—if you be at any loss about that matter only apply to Mr. Industry, he has been the great replenisher and furnisher of all shops in the world, and without doubt will give his assistance to you. It appears to me that tho flour is very low at this time, it must before long rise very considerably. The exportation of provision has of late been so difficult and our trade to the West Indies so much harassed<sup>4</sup> that nothing less could be expected but a cheapness of our provisional articles. A change in these particulars must soon take place.

If your cousin, Miss Reese,<sup>5</sup> still continues with her relations on Rocky River, pray present her my compliments in the most respectful terms. Let me hear how my sister<sup>6</sup> and her numerous family enjoy their health. As to her happiness she and I never could agree respecting its constituent parts. I only desire she may always find herself as happy as I ever wish her. I asked numerous questions in

my last letter,—the answers of some of them were important,—I might almost have consulted the Oracle of Delphi in the same time.

Yours Respectfully,

CHARLES WILSON HARRIS.

Mr. Robt. Harris,  
Cabarrus.  
(via)  
Charlotte

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<sup>1</sup> Probably William Lee Davidson, step-brother to Charles and Robert Harris. His mother, the widow of General William Davidson, who was killed at Cowan's Ford in 1780, married the elder Robert Harris. His mother was Mary Brevard before her first marriage. William Lee Davidson was a state senator from Mecklenburg for a number of years after 1813; was a patron of education, and particularly of Davidson College, which bears his name.

<sup>2</sup> Name of a horse.

<sup>3</sup> John Allison, member of the Commons from Cabarrus in 1798, 1800, and from 1802 to 1805.

<sup>4</sup> Both French and English interference with neutral trade, as an incident of the great European struggle, was a most distressing feature of our political and economic life in the closing decade of the 18th and the opening decade of the 19th century. In the war of 1812 we finally turned upon England, one of our tormentors, though we had suffered scarcely less from France.

<sup>5</sup> Probably the daughter of Jane Harris and Reverend Thomas Reese, and sister of Edwin Reese.

<sup>6</sup> Jane Harris (the younger), wife of Nathaniel Alexander. This only sister of Charles and Robert Harris, bore her husband nine children.

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HALIFAX, Jan'y 6, 1799.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter of Dec. 1st, came to hand, you there detail the difficulties which have prevented you from becoming a merchant. I wish it was in my power to remove them, there is no situation in this town or neighborhood that I could recommend, besides it would be highly imprudent for one who enjoys such a constitution as you do, to sport with it in this sickly climate. I already sensibly feel that I am on the misty melancholy and diseased banks of Roanoke!<sup>1</sup> Not on your pure, cheerful and healthy hills. Some opportunity no doubt will soon occur in your favor and afford ample employment to you without removing from home, in the meantime the Farm, Mills, etc., will not leave you entirely without some business.

If possible I shall remove to the University during the sickly months of next season, at any rate I will be there in July, at the commencement. Perhaps it may be convenient for you to meet me at that place, if so, let me hear from you.

Whether you have had an opportunity of conveying my horse to Chapel Hill, I have not yet heard.

Present my respects to my father and all my friends.

Yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert Wilson Harris,  
Cabarrus, (via Charlotte.)

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<sup>1</sup> Harris apparently was already beginning that decline in his health that was to end with his early death from tuberculosis, Jan. 15, 1804. Halifax, situated on the Roanoke River in the comparatively low, alluvial plain of our coast region, undoubtedly impressed Harris, an up-countryman, as unhealthy, as witness his frequent references thereto.

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HALIFAX, Feb. 78th, '99.

BROTHER: Your favour of the 4th inst., I have the pleasure of acknowledging, and am happy to hear that you are agreeably situated in Salisbury.<sup>1</sup> You need not be informed after the trial you have already made, that the business of the county requires the greatest attention and constant confinement. Your perseverance will certainly overcome every difficulty and discouragement. It is weakness in the extreme or great want of judgment to attempt an undertaking and afterwards relinquish it half finished. It is certain that little villages in our State are not very distinguished as schools of industry or virtue of any kind, but are rather remarkable for idleness in the youth that frequent their streets and public houses; you will, I hope, be little influenced by example of those of your own age.

My indisposition which began in last October has very much abated within a few weeks past, and yielded only to a regular course of the Rushonion, or Sangradian<sup>2</sup> practice of physic, after many ineffectual attempts to procure health by tonics, &c. In January I began to let blood once in every two days, and drink salts continually. This regimen, though

unlikely to produce the effect, pursued rigorously for ten or twelve days, restored me in some measure to my former complexion and strength.

When last in Salisbury I left in Evan Alexander's care,<sup>3</sup> among other books, Martin's Natural Philosophy, in three vol. octavos; they are books which were once possessed by an uncle<sup>4</sup> of ours, who died at Princeton, and were given to me as 'remembrances.' Please to call upon Mr. Alexander and take them into your care. Should I not call upon you for them, this letter will be a proof to others that I intended them as a present to you.

It is yet uncertain whether I will travel in the summer as far as Salisbury; there is but little doubt of my being at Chapel Hill in July, where I would be happy to meet with you if it would not interfere with your business.

Please to present my best respects to Mr. Torrence<sup>5</sup> and his lady. I am, dear sir,

Most respectfully,

Your brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Robert W. Harris.

<sup>1</sup> Early in 1799 Robert Wilson Harris, after a period of evident hesitation in the matter of a pursuit, went to Salisbury and engaged in a mercantile business. Whether he was in an independent venture or in the capacity of an employee there the author is unable to discover. He remained in Salisbury until sometime in 1802.

<sup>2</sup> The Rushonion or Sangradian practice of physic was the practice of copious blood-letting as a cure for numerous human ills. Dr. Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was its chief exponent of use in America during the latter decade of the 18th century. He played a leading part in the fight against the epidemic of yellow fever which visited Philadelphia in 1793, breaking down his own health by treating a hundred to a hundred and fifty patients a day. His method of treatment was to give doses of calomel and jalap, bleed freely, and drench the patient, within and without, with warm water. He aroused much criticism within and without the profession. Peter Porcupine (William Cobbett) in his gazette likened Rush to Dr. Sangrado, a blood-letting quack in Le Sage's *Gil Blas*. Rush brought suit against Cobbett for libel and secured a verdict for \$5,000 damages.

<sup>3</sup> Evan Elexander, of Salisbury, Rowan county, Trustee of the University 1799 to 1809, and representative in the Commons from the borough of Salisbury from 1798 to 1803.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Harris, full-brother to Dr. Charles Harris of "Favoni" and half-brother to Robert Harris, father of Charles Wilson Harris. Samuel Harris graduated at Princeton in 1787 and was tutor there in 1788 and in 1789 until his death in that year.

<sup>5</sup> Albert Torrence. This gentleman was of Irish birth, born 1752. He



settled in Rowan county sometime just before the Revolution, building a home on the heights overlooking the Yadkin River to the northeast of Salisbury, and facing the "Jersey Settlement" on the opposite side of the river. It was from this height that Cornwallis cannonaded General Nathaniel Greene across the river in the latter's memorable retreat through North Carolina in 1781. The Torrence home was a center of culture and refinement in the early days of the republic. Here a ball was tendered President Washington while on his southern tour in 1791. Mrs. Torrence's maiden name was Hackett, her sister, Abigail O'Neil Hackett, becoming the wife of Robert Harris (the younger) in 1801. Albert Torrence reared four sons, Hugh, Albert, James and Charles, and one daughter who married Wm. E. Powe, of Cheraw, S. C. The elder Torrence died in 1825 at the age of seventy-two. The Torrence home about this date came to be known as "The Heights of Gowerle."

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HALIFAX, June 4, 1799.

DEAR BROTHER:

My health has much improved since I did myself the pleasure of writing to you. Soon after my letter I submitted to another course of bleeding which had its effect. Still a little of the bile floats in my system but it leaves me strength and spirit enough to pursue my business.

I flatter myself that you continue to be much pleased with you shop engagements,—a forced employment can never thrive. On the first of July I visit the University.<sup>1</sup> Nothing could reconcile me to the disappointment which I would feel at not meeting with you there, but hearing that you were much better employed. At present I continue but one day at home.

Excuse the shortness of this, I am,

With respect and affection,

Your brother,

Robert W. Harris,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Salisbury,

N. Carolina.

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<sup>1</sup> The degree of Master of Arts, then an honorary degree, was conferred on Harris by the University at Commencement, July 5, 1799, his journey referred to above being made to Chapel Hill for the purpose of its reception.

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HALIFAX, Nov. 18th, 1799.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

Your letter due the first inst. has not yet arrived. I presume it has not been owing to any want of regularity in you,

but to the want of punctuality in the post riders. Pray how is your health? Is your father returned? What news from your sister and family? It is thro' you alone that I converse with all my friends in the back-country. They are silent, they forget me in a moment. Were I in a less contemplative, or reflecting mood, than I feel myself at present, there would be sufficient reason to induce me to consider of how little consequence the life of an individual is to his country, friends, or even relatives, who is a young man, without a character, just entering upon business, and single or a bachelor? If he goes, he is no more missed than a grain of sand from the seashore. Such I feel is my situation at present. Let me look forward, suppose success attends me in my profession, my demise would be a matter of joy not grief to a needy tribe of brother attorneys. Suppose I had an established character, and filled situations of eminence, envy would clap her wings with rapture to hear I was no more, and many a sprightly sparkling eye would be fixed upon the vacancy I had filled. If married, rich, of a comfortable age, and blessed (as the world is pleased to term it) with children, my condition would not be improved. My own family would smile in their hearts, when sable black covered their outsides, for now they become masters of themselves and property,—these are not wild speculations. They are the result of observations on real life. I always thought there was more ingenuity, than reality in Cicero's famous treatise on the pleasures of old age. One of the greatest pleasures I now enjoy is the perusal of a letter from you and the monthly expectation of another. Pray do not disappoint me.

You will conceive me Hypo.<sup>1</sup> from the above, but I still act the the farce of life with as comic a face as any of my neighbors, and as the situation of my health will permit, which is very far from being firm.

I go to court this moment to engage in the disputes of others, and scuffle for a /40. Perhaps you may think my mind

better prepared for (Melancholy) dissertation than for forensic jangling.

I recommend you to the favors of fortune  
with all the affection of a brother.

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury.

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<sup>1</sup> Hypochondriacal. This spirit of morbidity disclosed by the above letter seems to have mastered the writer from time to time and is doubtless explained by his declining health. The ever lengthening shadow of the dread disease, consumption, now in a few years was to end his life.

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HALIFAX, Jan. 20th, 1800.

DR. BROTHER,

The Bearer of this is Mr. Joseph Davie,<sup>1</sup> brother of Gen. Davie, I recommend him to your attention, should he call upon you. His stay here is short, and I have only time to express my good wishes for your welfare. Your double letter of the 14th Inst. arrived this morning with affidavits. A few days ago was seized at Edenton the schooner Sam. Tredwell, John Drew, owner, and libelled by the collector for trading to the French West Indies, contrary to a late act of Congress, prohibiting the intercourse,<sup>2</sup> &c. The Captain says he was carried in by force by a French privateer, and only released on conditions that he would dispose of his cargo there and load with the produce of the Island. However there is great reason to believe that there was some secret intelligence and perfect understanding between the captors & captured, and that the latter *consented* to be taken in to port by force. It may upon investigation turn out to be one of that species of smuggling complained of by our naval officers, some months past. I believe she is the first vessel that has been seized under the same circumstances. Enclosed I send two notes, one on Wm. Snow, the other on Mr. Winter, both of Rowan county. They are for sums under the jurisdiction of the court and must therefore be tried by Justices of the peace. The money is due to Gen. Davie. I must

request that you would oblige me by placing them in the hands of such constables as may collect the money if they will not pay on demand. If you give them to any constable or other person, take a receipt for them, get the money as soon as possible.

Inclosed is the rough scribble of a piece intended for Hodge's paper.<sup>3</sup> I altered my mind. If you think proper request Mr. Coupee<sup>4</sup> to print it and send me the paper containing it by post. It is intended to expose the fatal consequence of the much delayed prosecutions against a set of the most consummate villains. The attorney general is not perfectly excusable. Be secret in this paragraph.

I am, my dear brother,

Most affectionately,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury.

Pray present my respects to Mr. Torrence and family.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Davie must have been on a visit from England to his brother Wm. R. Davie. General Davie had no relatives resident in America besides an uncle, William Richardson, of South Carolina, by whom he was reared and for whom he was named.

<sup>2</sup> After the "X. Y. Z." incident with France in 1798 the Federal Administration, John Adams president, regarded war with that country as inevitable and began to prepare therefor. Congress swiftly rushed through several acts looking to that end. One of these created a navy department; another increased our very weak navy by a number of frigates to be immediately built; another forbade trade with the French West Indies; and still another ordered our navy to protect the residue of our trade to the West Indies and attack and capture French ships interfering therewith. Under this last policy a number of sea-fights occurred with French vessels, which added prestige to our infant navy. About 84 French vessels, mainly privateers, were taken by us before France was brought in 1800 to make a new treaty with the United States. Thereupon our naval-commercial war with France ceased until Napoleon laid new restrictions upon our trade during Jefferson's second term. At the date of this letter, Wm. R. Davie, whose practice at law Harris had now assumed, was in Paris with Elsworth and Vans Murray arranging the treaty that was soon to settle our differences with France temporarily.

<sup>3</sup> Abraham Hodge, a veteran printer and pioneer newspaper man in North Carolina, was born in the colony of New Nork, 1755, and died at Halifax, in the state of North Carolina, Aug. 3, 1805. Aided by the grant of the public printing he set up a press at New Bern in 1786 and published there "The State Gazette of North Carolina." In 1789 the business was removed to Edenton, the publishers now being Hodge and Wills. In 1793 Hodge began to publish in Halifax "The North Carolina State Journal." Continuing the Halifax paper, Hodge and his nephew, William Boylan, began in 1796 to publish in Fayetteville the "North Carolina Minerva and Fayetteville Advertiser." In 1799 they removed this paper to Raleigh where it continued as "The



North Carolina Minerva and Raleigh Advertiser." The legislative session of 1800 (Nov. 17-Dec. 20) deprived Hodge of the public printing, transferring it to Joseph Gales who had in the previous year set up *The Raleigh Register* as the organ of the Republican party which was now assuming definite control in the state. Hodge and his nephew, Boylan, were staunch Federalists. They and their friends accepted the loss of the public printing with ill grace. (See other letters below). The "piece" referred to by Harris was evidently first intended for publication in Hodge's paper at Raleigh.

<sup>4</sup> Francis Coupee. He established a print shop at Salisbury in 1798 and in connection therewith published "The North Carolina Mercury and Salisbury Advertiser."

<sup>5</sup> Blake Baker, of Warren county, was Attorney-General of North Carolina from 1795 to 1802. For further references to him see letters below.

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HALIFAX, March 15th, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your favor written on your birthday I have the pleasure of acknowledging. The subject is important to you and cannot fail to be interesting to me. Such considerations and speculations as you have entered into are well suited to a Birth-day, and very different from the thoughtless, giddy mode now in use at this place, of spending such seasons. When you seriously ask my advice in a matter of such moment as the plan of life you ought to adopt, I wish that I possessed experience and wisdom, that I might answer you to some purpose. If I have discovered any truth from the few years that I have lived, and from the little observation I have made, it is, that happiness and success in life are not inseparably connected with any particular employment or pursuit. The Farmer, the Merchant, the Physician, the Mechanic with steadiness, attention and prudence enjoy each his share of this world's goods. The Farmer stands upon more stable foundation, the Merchant plays a game at which he must at times risk his all. In either line of life I flatter myself you would in some measure succeed. Rivalship of which you speak is nothing. It is to be expected, not feared in every situation & should only serve to heighten our exertions and strengthen our resolution. When you form your plans and have resolved, let nothing, nothing discourage you. As a farmer I doubt not but you would be respected in your neighborhood and being somewhat acquainted with transacting business you might successfully at times mix with it a

little traffic & speculation. The greatest fortunes are made in this country by farming and planting.

You have heard of Truxton's<sup>1</sup> desperate engagement with a supposed 54 French frigate. We are at present all in doubt and uncertainty respecting that business; from a suggestion that she was engaged with the United States frigate, the Constitution, Capt. Talbot,<sup>2</sup> of 44 Guns, it is said the latter has been spoken off the capes of Virginia, much damaged by a fight with a French frigate which she would have taken but a sail from Guadeloupe hove in sight,—these supposed fights happening nearly about the same time and place appear a little suspicious,—we hope the report is unfounded, and that a mistake so unfortunate and disgraceful to our Navy has not been made.<sup>3</sup> It may be a blast to keep alive the old misunderstanding<sup>4</sup> between the Captains of those two Frigates. Allen J. Green,<sup>5</sup> once a fellow-student at the University, has been appointed a midshipman, and has taken his place on board of the Chesapeake,<sup>6</sup> a vessel built in Norfolk and now nearly ready for sea.

You speak of my indisposition and the propriety of my removing from Halifax. It is possible I might recover my health by a removal and find business in my profession in other parts of the state, but I have not relinquished all hopes of a perfect recovery even here. I am now engaged in a practice about to become valuable, I have in a great measure overcome the embarrassments of a young practitioner, am employed in cases of great moment to my friends, their confidence in me has been personal. It would be a poor return for me to make them for their attention, either to withdraw myself from their suits or to place them in the hands of another Attorney, nor is it probable that my situation in these respects will alter. New actions are commencing by my advice. When one business dies, three or four others are born. On these accounts I can only leave my post under circumstances that would form in themselves a sufficient apology for me; my want of punctuality in writing you for some time past was owing to absence on my circuit. Let me hear

from you regularly and of your health. I am, my dear Brother, yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. C.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Thomas Truxton commanded the United States frigate "Constellation" in the attempt of our government, 1799-1800, to repel the effort of France and England to prey upon our commerce under the claim of enforcing their contraband laws. It was the 1st of February, 1800, that the drawn fight between the "Constellation" and the French ship "La Vengeance" had occurred near Guadaloupe in the West Indies. The "La Vengeance" was outpointed in the action, despite her superiority in men and guns. Though she escaped and later crept into the Dutch port of Curacao, she was found to be all but disabled, with fifty of her men killed and one hundred and ten wounded. The American ship sustained a loss of only 39 killed and wounded. In February the previous year Truxton, commanding the "Constitution," had captured the French ship "L'Insurgente." These two successes had raised the credit of this commander to a great height in American public opinion. Congress presented him with a gold medal March 25, 1800.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Silas Talbot, a veteran seaman of the Revolution, and now in command of the "Constitution." His notable success in the naval war with France was his ruse in Port Platte, San Domingo, by which he captured the French privateer, "Sandwich."

<sup>3</sup> This rumor proved to be unfounded.

<sup>4</sup> The editor has been unable to discover the cause of the differences between Truxton and Talbot, though it must have been a subject of wide discussion at the time.

<sup>5</sup> Allen J. Green, of South Carolina, a matriculate of the University of North Carolina in 1795. He was one of the founders of "The Debating Society," which, within the same year split into two branches, the seceding members setting up the "Concord Society." This latter society renamed itself the following year (Aug. 29, 1796) the Philanthropic Society, and has so remained. Green remained with the parent society, which soon took the name "Dialectic." Green remained only one year at the University. He received the appointment of midshipman Jan. 6, 1800, and resigned Jan. 17, 1803.

<sup>6</sup> This was the unfortunate vessel that, under Commodore Barron in 1807, submitted to a search for deserting British seamen at the hands of the British ship "Leopard" and for which Barron was court-martialed and dismissed from the service. The same ship, in 1813, under command of Captain James Lawrence, was defeated off Boston harbor by the British ship "Shannon" and taken into Halifax harbor, Nova Scotia.

HALIFAX, April 6th, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter by Mr. Hodge I received yesterday. It is true I have not had it in my power for some time past to write agreeably to our engagement, owing principally to my absence from this place. Miss Narcissa's<sup>1</sup> elopement I was sorry to hear of, and is the more distressing to the parents on account of the death of their favorite child. That family



about the time of my birth and before, enjoyed prospects equal to any other in the place. Their sons are———. <sup>2</sup> Their daughters no longer bear the name of the family. This is not mere accident but owing to some causes which are worthy of being enquired after and avoided. Of all the misfortunes that can happen a man, that is the greatest which arises from a father's disappointment in the prospects of his children———. You are to be a farmer, I presume. <sup>3</sup> Once I advised you to steer a distance from Love & matrimony. Your plans were then different from what they are at present. If you settle at Ragton, I will hope to hear, soon after, that you have joined yourself to an amiable——— who is as much the choice of your friends as of yourself (in serio).

You say nothing in your letters of your health, from this I am led to conclude that you have recovered from your emaciation and now weigh full 150 lbs. I have not been so particular as to balance myself for several months, but imagine I am nearly as when I last saw you. In subscribing for Peter Porcupine, *Rush Light*, <sup>4</sup> I have also directed him to send you one. Each number will cost you the postage only, to wit, six cents. After reading them you can oblige Dr. Harris <sup>5</sup> &c with a perusal. They may not be masterpieces but will serve to wash out the littlenesses of some great characters. His facts are generally true, I may say, always, but he often paints in high colours. His abuse, though great, stands upon a true foundation. I am happy to hear of the true federalism of your county. <sup>6</sup> Mr. Hodge <sup>7</sup> brings back a goodly report. I wish how long the back country may continue Industrious, Virtuous & Patriotic. Here <sup>8</sup> party influence or omnipotent brandy (both blind leaders) dictate everything.

I have in conjunction with a Mr. Brown, a fellow lawyer, purchased four or five lots in Halifax, in the upper part of it, and on an airy elevation and am now fixing up an office into which I shall remove before June. I hope for many advantages from this alteration. I now live so low in town that the sickly current of Roanoke continually rolls under my



very nose. I live often in fogs,—while mosquitoes and frogs sing and croak me to rest. Not a word from Gen. Davie.<sup>9</sup> His lady<sup>10</sup> is very uneasy, and fretted herself into a real indisposition.

My respects to Mr. Torrence's family. Accept of my thanks for Mr. McRea's eulogium.

I am, dear brother,  
most affectionately yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Hodge expects and begs that you send him a receipt from the clerk of Mecklenburg county for the Laws & Journals, as soon as you can receive the same.

Halifax, N. C.

April 7th.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. C.

<sup>1</sup> The identity of "Miss Narcissa" and her family the editor is unable to discover. The family was one probably resident in Salisbury and with which the Harris brothers both were acquainted.

<sup>2</sup> The failure of the writer to complete the sentence relative to the "sons" seems from the context to indicate "unworthiness" on their part.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Harris had evidently informed his brother of a contemplated change in his occupation, probably indicating his purpose to return to their father's home to engage in agriculture and trade. The editor thinks it probable that he did reside with his father between the early winter of 1800 and the summer of 1802. At the latter date he established himself as merchant at Sneedsboro, in Anson county. *See letters below.*

<sup>4</sup> Rushlight (a rush candle, or its light; hence, a small feeble light). William Cobbett, English journalist, was born at Fordham, in Surry, England, 1762. Coming to America by way of France in 1792, he set up a print-shop in Philadelphia, then the seat of the American government, and under the pen name of Peter Porcupine lashed French republicanism and American democracy with a scorn "as coarse and personal as it was always bitter." Cobbett reached his public mainly through pamphlets until 1797, when he established, March 4, "Porcupine's Gazette" as a daily, and in 1798 a tri-weekly mail edition of the same paper, without the advertisements, and called the "Country Porcupine." As a champion of Federalism and scourge of Republicanism Cobbett's productions were universally popular among the Federalists. In 1799 his paper was removed from Philadelphia on account of the yellow fever epidemic and continued as a weekly until early 1800 at Bustleton, Pennsylvania. About this date Dr. Benjamin Rush secured the \$5000 verdict against him for libel (see an earlier note). Seriously crippled financially, Cobbett now launched the "Rushlight" to continue his attack upon Rush and other of his enemies, being careful however, to keep within the law. The "Rushlight" was in the form of a pamphlet and seven numbers in all were issued. Nos. 1 to 6 were published February 15, 28, March 15, 31, April 30, and August 30, 1800. Vol. 2, No. 1 (undated) has title: "The Republican Rushlight by William Cobbett." No. 6 was published in London. No place of publication is given for Vol. 2, No. 1. The other numbers were published in New York. Cobbett left America in the fall of 1800. In January, 1802, he began to publish in London his "Weekly Political Register" which he con-

tinued without intermission until his death in 1835. This new publication was at first stoutly Tory in politics, but later became an uncompromising champion of Radicalism.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Charles Harris, of Cabarrus, uncle of the Harris brothers.

<sup>6</sup> This was "presidential year," and there has been no period in our national history that presents an aspect of stronger partizanship in politics. Federalists and Republicans throughout the nation confronted each other in a spirit of utter distrust and rancor. Jefferson, the "hope" of the Republicans, achieved the presidency over John Adams and the latter retired from office in 1801 with utter bad grace and amid the gloomiest forebodings of his party-men as to the future of the country in the hands of the radicals. The western and southwestern counties in North Carolina remained staunchly Federalist during these stormy years, in general returning Federalist representatives to Congress from 1799 to 1803, a number of districts continuing to do so as late as 1813.

<sup>7</sup> Abraham Hodge, the editor. See *supra*.

<sup>8</sup> Halifax and the congressional district centering therein was strongly Republican. Willis Alston, a "rabid radical" in the eyes of the Federalists, represented the district continuously from 1799 to 1813.

<sup>9</sup> General William R. Davie, in conjunction with Oliver Ellsworth and William Vans Murray, had been appointed as commissioner to France in 1799 by President Adams in an endeavor to heal our differences with that country. Davie had resigned the governorship of the state to accept the mission. A treaty was signed with Napoleon on the 30th of September, 1800. Davie returned to America in December, reaching his home in Halifax on the 26th of that month.

<sup>10</sup> Mrs. William R. Davie was Sarah Jones, sister of General Allen Jones and Willie Jones of Halifax. The latter was the adroit political leader of the forces in the state which had successfully opposed the ratification of the Federal Constitution by the state in 1788, deferring the action of the state for more than a year. After North Carolina did enter the Union Jones withdrew from political life.

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Second Sunday in May 1800.

HALIFAX.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I am just freed from the fatigues of a tedious and busy court. Judge Haywood<sup>1</sup> presided,—it was his object to disburthen the docket of a number of old disputed cases, which have been expecting slow-footed justice for more than ten years. Our jail has not been more crowded with villains than at the commencement of the last term. Two persons were committed for horse stealing, three for stealing negroes, two for the murder of negroes, one for perjury, one for passing counterfeit money, and two witnesses for the State,—of suspicious characters who could not give security for their appearance at court. Of these, three were sentenced to death. One to the pillory, others fined or acquitted. This is a melancholy catalogue<sup>2</sup> to the man who has been calculating upon the progressive improvement of our country in civilization and morality and is enough to produce despair

when added to the Blacklists that are kept at Raleigh. I am well persuaded that it is in your part of the State if anywhere, that we can discover anything like general morality. There religion is not considered a disgrace and its teachers are<sup>3</sup> still reputable.

Elections<sup>4</sup> now begin to be the general subject of conversations. Parties in this district become more and more defined. It is not the personal good qualities of a candidate that are inquired for; whether he is a Federalist or not, is all the question. T. Blount<sup>5</sup> will poll against Alston<sup>6</sup> for Congress. Judge Haywood against Gideon Alston<sup>7</sup> for elector. This last is the most important. The re-election of Adams to the Presidency is very doubtful. Should Jefferson be successful we may expect that those complaints and discontents which prevailed in the State of Pennsylvania on the election of McKean<sup>8</sup> to the government will extend over all the Union. We must expect that those who now hold posts of Honor, trust, or profit, under the United States, however worthy for abilities or integrity will be displaced purely because they are federal and their places filled with such as accord with the Chief Magistrate in their political principles.<sup>9</sup>

Judge McCay<sup>10</sup> is said to be the candidate for elector in the Salisbury division. Pray let me know what prospect there is of his succeeding and who opposes him.

Please present my best respects to your father, sister, &c. when next you see them, or write to them. It will be impossible for me, I fear, to see you this summer. My old, faithful horse, for some time past has been a little lame and I could not safely trust (him) in so long a Journey.

My respects to Mr. Torrence and family. Tell Mr. E. Osborne<sup>11</sup> that I am happy to hear that he is about to *buckle to* with so amiable a lady as Miss S———S———.

Your Brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,

Salisbury.

Halifax, N. C.

May 12th, 1800.



<sup>1</sup> John Haywood, of Halifax, was Attorney-General of North Carolina from 1791 to 1794. In 1794 he was elected by the Assembly as a judge of the Superior Court and served on the bench until 1800, at which time he resigned, and accepted a retainer of \$1,000 to defend James Glasgow against the charge of issuing fraudulent land warrants while Secretary of State (1777-1798). By this action, and his course during the trial, Haywood incurred a considerable degree of odium in the state. As a result he emigrated to Tennessee where he became a member of the Supreme Court, which office he held until his death in 1826. While a citizen of North Carolina he had published "A Treatise on the Duty and Office of Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, etc.," and "A Manual of the Laws of North Carolina." In Tennessee he published "The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee."

<sup>2</sup> This gloomy picture of court congestion and the multiplicity and character of the crimes before the County Courts in the year 1800 tends somewhat to soften the view, now so generally and justly prevalent, that our judicial system is inadequate and too slow-moving. The contrast is in favor of the present; but few would contend that our present system is a remarkable product for a hundred and more years of growth.

<sup>3</sup> Harris' appreciation of the fact that the West, or "back country" was at this date maintaining Federalist leaders in office, while the East generally was in control of the Democracy.

<sup>4</sup> Elections for the Seventh Congress and for president of the United States.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Blount, representative from North Carolina in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Congresses (1793-1799) and again in the 9th, 10th and 12th Congresses, dying in office in 1812. He was a resident of Tarboro in Edgecombe. He was sixth in a family of ten, the offspring of Jacob Blount, of Craven. Three others of the brothers attained distinction in public life. These were William, Willie, and John Gray Blount. (For the family genealogy see Wheeler's Reminiscences, page 130, *et seq.*)

<sup>6</sup> Willis Alston, of Halifax. Member of Congress from 1799 to 1815 and again from 1825 to 1831. He was a strong republican partizan and much hated by his opponents. During the War of 1812 he was Chairman of House Ways and Means Committee.

<sup>7</sup> Gideon Alston was a brother of Willis Alston and likewise an ardent Republican. He was in the state senate in 1805 and 1806. In 1807 he was elected a Councillor of State by the Assembly and to the same office in each successive year until 1831, one year excepted, 1815.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas McKean, member from Pennsylvania to the Stamp Act Congress, 1765, delegates from Delaware to the First Continental Congress, 1774, and to the Second Continental Congress, 1775, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence and of the Articles of Confederation, author of the Constitution of Delaware. He was the only man who served continuously through all the sessions of the two Continental Congresses. In 1799 he was elected in opposition to the Federalists as governor of Pennsylvania where the transition to Republican control was accompanied by loud mutterings of discontent on the part of the Federalist party. Nevertheless he was chosen for three successive terms, retiring from the office in 1808.

<sup>9</sup> Forebodings as to what Jefferson would do with the appointing power, should he be elected president, was general among the Federalists throughout the country. Upon election, however, his use of the appointing power was much milder than his opponents had anticipated, though they refused to admit this. He made no clean sweep of the Federalist incumbents but attempted a policy of equalization by degrees, removing a few Federalist officeholders directly, replacing others with Republicans as terms expired by limitation, and still others whom death removed from office. In other words, the first Republican president of the United States was not a "spillsman."

<sup>10</sup> Spruce McCay, of Rowan, member of the Superior Court bench from 1782 to 1808, the date of his death. He was one of the most useful citizens of the state during the years of his service. He married Fannie Henderson, daughter of Judge Richard Henderson, founder of the Transylvania Company which made the pioneer effort, on an extended scale, in the settlement of Kentucky and Tennessee. Contrary to Harris' supposition, it does not seem



likely that Judge McCay was a candidate for Congress from the Salisbury district in 1800. In that year Archibald Henderson, McCay's brother-in-law, was the Federalist candidate for the district, to succeed himself, and was successfully elected.

<sup>11</sup> Edwin Jay Osborne, of Rowan, a member of the first graduating class at the University of North Carolina (1798). He became a useful lawyer, practicing first at Wilmington and later removing to Salisbury. He was the father of Judge James W. Osborne, who was born in 1811, graduated at the State University in 1830, and became one of the most brilliant lawyers the state has ever produced. He was a judge of the Superior Court from 1859 to his death in 1865, and was the father of the well-known former District Attorney of New York of the same name and now living in that city. Harris' reference above to Edwin Jay Osborne's marriage (buckle to?) with a Miss S\_\_\_\_\_ S\_\_\_\_\_ must have been based on mere rumor, which proved inaccurate. Osborne married a Miss Harriet Walker, of Wilmington.

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HALIFAX, June 20, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter of the first Ins. I received, and am sorry that my business and absence prevent me from being as punctual in my correspondence as you are. The fatigue of myself and horse, with the circuit, which I have just finished, the length of the journey and that of the season have conspired to determine me to forego the pleasure of seeing my relations this Summer. The extent of my excursion will be to Shockoe Springs<sup>1</sup> in Warren County. My inclinations still are set upon a voyage to sea, but the short intervals in my business present an insuperable Barrier to the execution of such a scheme.<sup>2</sup>

I continue repairing the pleasant lots which I informed you Mr. Brown & myself had purchased; the house is almost ready for my reception. I have laid out about one hundred dollars besides the purchase, and to make it convenient, some hundreds more would be necessary. Boarding is here so extravagant that I look forward to such arrangements as will enable me to furnish breakfast and supper within myself.

Our general attention as to public affairs is set upon the election of president and vice-president. The issue depends upon our state.<sup>3</sup> As far as I can procure information, the following is a statement of probabilities:

		FEDERAL	ANTIFEDERAL	PROBABILITIES
Edenton	District	Mr. Harvey	Col. Hamilton	} antified.
Bertie	"	Wm. McKenzie	Col. Winn	
Halifax	"	Mr. Haywood	Gid. Alston	
Washington	"	Col. Mayo	Mr. Ed. Hall	} federal
Granville	"	L. Henderson	Col. Taylor	
Hillsboro	"	W. Alves	Col. Tatom	doubtful
Fayette	"	Martin	_____	} federal
Newbern	"	Mr. Jones	_____	
Salisbury	"	Judge MacCoy	_____	
Wilmington	"	_____	_____	doubtful
Morgan	"	_____	_____	antified.
Surry &c.	"	_____	_____	antified.

Almost every person has his own opinion respecting these elections. Pray let me know what is the general opinion respecting them in your county.

Should it prove true that Buonaparte has lately been mortally wounded<sup>5</sup> our negotiations must be retarded and our expectations of celebrating the fourth of July with Gen. Davie be entirely disappointed.<sup>6</sup> It is now known that the Portsmouth—Capt. Neal, sailed for the purpose of bringing back our Envoys—she has been gone nearly three months.

From Raleigh we hear that Glasgow<sup>7</sup> and Willoughby Williams<sup>8</sup> have been found guilty, that the Grand Jury has found a bill against Thomas Blount.<sup>9</sup> It has been whispered that the indictments against these men are deficient and not supportable, if so, we shall hear that Judgment has been accepted. This would completely settle the business with our State officers, particularly with Mr. Baker.<sup>10</sup>

I am, your brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury,  
N. Carolina.

Mail Halifax, N. C.  
June 21st.

<sup>1</sup> Shockoe Springs, in Warren County, was in colonial days and the early period of the republic a well-known and favorite health resort. The waters were regarded as having excellent medicinal qualities and attracted health-seekers from afar.

<sup>2</sup> Harris made this voyage to sea before his death and failed to find the relief he anticipated. See below.

<sup>3</sup> In the electoral vote of 1800 Adams received 65 and Jefferson and Burr 73 each, the election in consequence being thrown into the House for a decision between Jefferson and Burr, and with the well known result. North Carolina had twelve electoral votes at this date, the electors being chosen by districts. Of these Adams secured four and Jefferson eight. Hence Harris' estimate of the probable Federalist strength exceeded it by one vote. In 1796 Adams had carried only one district in the state.

<sup>4</sup> Harris' list of the electoral candidates is incomplete, and the editor is unable to complete it with the material accessible.

<sup>5</sup> One of the many false rumors that frequently reached America of Napoleon's assassination.

<sup>6</sup> General Davie did not arrive in America until the first week in December, 1800, landing in Norfolk. Hope in the favorable character of the treaty he carried immediately boosted the price of export commodities. (See *Raleigh Register*, Dec. 16, 1800).

<sup>7</sup> James Glasgow, secretary of state in North Carolina from 1777 to 1798, was brought to trial the 10th of June, 1800, before a special court composed, by an act of the Assembly for the especial purpose, of the judges of the four superior court districts into which the state was then divided. Judge John Haywood resigned before the court convened and became the chief advocate of the defense. The remaining three judges, Samuel Johnston, John Louis Taylor, and John Hall constituted the court. The charges against Glasgow embraced particular the fraudulent issue of land warrants by which he had materially profited. He was convicted, the court rendering its decision on the 17th June, the penalty being a fine of 2000 pounds and commitment to jail until the fine was paid.

<sup>8</sup> Willoughby Williams, of Greene County, Deputy Secretary of State, was indicted and tried with Glasgow for collusion and also convicted, his penalty being 500 pounds and jail until paid.

<sup>9</sup> The Blount brothers, Thomas and John Gray, were also indicted before the special court, charged with procurement of land warrants by fraud through James Armstrong, entry-taker of claims for western lands. The frauds charged were of date 1789, the lands concerned being now (1800) in the state of Tennessee. Both were ultimately acquitted. John Gray Blount was in early manhood a companion of Daniel Boone in trans-mountain exploration and had thus become interested in the western country. A resident of Beaufort, he was reputed at the date of the trial to be the largest landholder in the state, much of it, however, being property in the new state to the west. It was the western land interests of the Blount family that carried two other of the Blount brothers, William and Willie, to the trans-mountain frontier. In 1790 William Blount was appointed by Washington as governor of the Territory south of the Ohio, just ceded by Virginia and North Carolina to the Federal Government. The northern portion became the state of Kentucky in 1792. Blount was president of the Convention which made the Constitution under which Tennessee became a state in 1796. In the same year he was chosen United States senator from Tennessee and in 1797 was expelled from the senate for inciting the Creek and Cherokee Indians to attacks upon Spanish territory. Willie Blount was secretary to his brother while territorial governor, and himself governor of Tennessee from 1809 to 1815.

<sup>10</sup> Blake Baker, the Attorney-General, was suspected by the public of lacking zeal in his efforts to uncover the land frauds. So general became this opinion that he published a defense of himself. See *Raleigh Register*, Sept. 9, 1800.

WARREN COUNTY, SHOCKOE SPRINGS,  
July 11th, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have been at this place five days drinking the mineral, and feel no effects from it. I had greater expectations from the change of air and exercise than from any virtue in the water. I have fixed myself with accommodations a mile and a half from the springs, walk to it every morning before Breakfast, and ride to it at noon and night. This spring, like all others of the kind has profound wonders,—at one time or another every disorder in its turn has been removed by its power, if we are to credit *common report*. It rises within about eight feet from the bed of Shockoe Creek, is nearly as low as the creek water and springs from a bed of mud, which in wet seasons is trodden up by the cows (who are very fond of the water) and rendered inaccessible except by walking upon poles laid down for the purpose. The mud is black, and yellow sediment appears in every part of the spring or its branch. There is no inclosure around it. No baths. No accommodations to be had at the spot. The water is a strong dinsetic and from its taste I imagine it is principally nitrous. It is eight miles from Warrenton, 40 from Halifax and near 50 from Raleigh.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth of July has everywhere been celebrated with great attention. The toasts drunk upon that occasion will be a kind of key to the political sentiments of the most reputable class of citizens. Federalism and its opponent become daily more distinctly divided by districts, counties, towns, or neighborhoods, but this division will be only formidable when States become the limits of political opinions, then nothing less than a dissolution of our Union will be the consequence, and on this principle we seem now nearly ripe for a division.<sup>2</sup>

The death of Jefferson has been reported. It first came from Baltimore, the Jacobins<sup>3</sup> believe it not. I mentioned it to Citizen Macon<sup>4</sup> on my arrival at Warrenton. He had not heard it before, turned off, supposed I was sporting with him, and would have no further conversation on the subject.



It would entirely disconcert the wondrous and deep laid plans of those disorganizers.

I am closely engaged in learning the French language under the Marquis de Clugny,<sup>5</sup> and hope to be able to converse in it before Christmas. Give my respects to Mr. Torrence and family.

I am, with affection,

Your brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. C.

Warrenton, N. C.  
July 22nd, 1800.

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<sup>1</sup> See note on Shockoe Springs appended to an earlier letter in the series.

<sup>2</sup> As the presidential election of 1800 approached, party spirit ran so high that many public men seriously anticipated a dissolution of the Union. Partisan rancor was particularly stirred to white heat by the Alien and Sedition Acts and the trials that took place under the latter. Jefferson's followers believed these acts a clear invasion by Congress of the sphere of personal rights under state control. Centralization of all powers in the hands of the Federal government seemed to the Republicans the Federalists' program. The Virginia-Kentucky Resolutions voiced their protests and excitement continued to grow until Jefferson was actually in office. It was a critical year in American history, for the followers of Jefferson were doubtless inclined to go to extreme lengths to wrest control from the Federalist party.

<sup>3</sup> The followers of Jefferson were generally called "Jacobins" by their opponents during the last decade of the century. The purpose was to identify Republican principles with those of the extreme radicals, members of the Jacobin Clubs, in the "Terror" period of the French Revolution.

<sup>4</sup> Nathaniel Macon, of Warren County, representative in Congress from North Carolina from 1791 to 1817, speaker of the House from 1801 to 1807, and United States senator from 1817 to 1827. He was a stout supporter of the principals of Republicanism. Harris' reference to him as "citizen" Macon is ironical, citizen being the usual Federalist appellation given to the leaders of the democracy in America to emphasize their identity in principles with the extremists in France under whose influence titles of nobility had been abolished in the revolution and "citizen" decreed the only allowable prefix.

<sup>5</sup> A French nobleman resident in Warrenton, a refugee of the Revolution.

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WARRENTON,  
July 29th, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your letters of the first and 15th inst. arrived at this place a few days ago being forwarded by the P. M. of Halifax, and thank you for the information they contain. I hope

there is but little doubt respecting the selection of Mr. Henderson.<sup>1</sup> However firm your district may be, Jacobin principles seem to increase in strength here. In this division for Elector I believe the anti-federal candidate will receive a majority of votes in every county. Mr. Haywood, late judge, as affairs have turned, was the most improper person in the district to be proposed for that office. He is wavering and undetermined, and his conduct of late has not only ruined his own popularity but injured the cause which we expected he would promote. The resignation of his judgeship at a time the public had the greatest demand for his services, and when his place could not be filled by an appointment, is considered by every person in the same unfavorable light, and leads to a conclusion that avarice is his *primum mobile*. So far has it operated against him that in the county of Franklin where he resides, and for which he offers as a representative in the next General Assembly, he will not receive more than fifty votes.<sup>2</sup>

In your letters I hear nothing from Ragton nor from your neighbors. Is your father &c well? for he rarely sends me a letter. I received accounts a few days past from your sister.<sup>3</sup> She always writes to inform me of something disastrous, the death of her mother-in-law, and of others, her neighbors were announced in her last.

Tomorrow I leave this Republican county and will spend some days in Franklin and Nash on my return to Halifax; my court soon begins. I must be in readiness and have adopted your plan of writing some days before my promised time, when I suspect any business or absence might otherwise prevent it.

I am, Dr. Brother,

Yours affectionately,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. C.

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<sup>1</sup> Archibald Henderson, of Salisbury, a Federalist aspirant as representative in the 6th Congress. to be elected in November. Henderson was successful, and also again in 1802.

<sup>2</sup> See a former note on Haywood's resignation from the bench. He was defeated in 1800 both as candidate for presidential elector and for the Assembly.

<sup>3</sup> The only sister of Charles Wilson Harris and Robert Wilson Harris was named Jane, born in 1770, and died in 1842. She married Nathaniel Alexander, son of Abram Alexander, chairman of the "Mecklenburg Declaration" Convention.

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HALIFAX,

Aug. 3rd, 1800.

DEAR BROTHER,

I have arrived at Halifax sooner than was expected when I last wrote to you. A few fevers and agues have made their appearance here during my absence. As for myself I feel a little improved by my journey and hope to weather out the storm.

Letters from Gen. Davie arrived here by the two last posts, but contained nothing except of a private nature. They are dated as far back as the 19th of April. The Portsmouth, —Capt. Neal—was then waiting to bring the commissioners home. The General expected to celebrate the 4th of July in America. In this expectation he has been disappointed. The different accounts which we have seen in the papers respecting any final adjustment of our differences with France, or of a failure of the mission must be entirely fabricated. And little credit can be attached to any accounts of their proceedings until officially published.<sup>1</sup> In my absence the Rushlight<sup>2</sup> came to hand. Mr. Hodge who knew of my intention of sending you one set, was good enough to forward them postpaid. I hope you have received them. If your friends on Rocky River have not seen them, you can send them down. They will serve to pass off a dull moment.

Thomas Blount has been acquitted and his brother J. G. Blount, as they say *Honorably*. T. B.<sup>3</sup> has made an offer of his services as a representative to Congress. I cannot pretend to say whether or not he will be elected.

Let me hear from you as soon as your elections are decided. I am,

Your Brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. C.

<sup>1</sup> See note in an earlier letter.

<sup>2</sup> Porcupine's pamphlet gazette. See note in an earlier letter.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Blount. He was defeated for this, the 6th Congress. See note to an earlier letter for his congressional services.

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HALIFAX, Aug. 29th, 1800.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter containing the details of the election in your district I this day received,—the substance I have given to Mr. Hodge. I did not write agreeably to your request, because I found that all information which my letter could contain would be included in Mr. H.'s Journal.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Blount<sup>2</sup> lost his election by a great majority, but who are we represented by? Why, a trifling, Jesuitical pretender to politics, who if he dare to speak as he thinks would be found very discordant in sentiment from a great, and the most respectable part of his constituents. All that can be said in his favour is comprised in saying that he is preferable to Blount. That Great Demagogue is worn down. I attended Tarboro court last week. I did not meet with him in any company during the whole term. No dinings nor drinkings at his house, none of his prattle in the streets or public houses. The hand bills which he has industriously posted along every road, seem to pronounce to all that he is at least of a suspicious character. They have wrought conviction in no person's mind, but have raised doubts in many.

Mr. Hodge's last papers contain some accounts of the speeches of a great<sup>3</sup> Lawyer. Were you acquainted with Blake Baker, it would be unnecessary to inform you that he is orator and politician alluded to. He has lately commenced a most violent demonstration and always was a fool. He has been open and scurrilous in his abuse of Mr. Hodge, & a few more in this neighborhood. And that provoked what you now see in print; he will be a candidate for Senator at next assembly, and (also?) Judge Taylor.<sup>4</sup>

Letters arrived here this evening from Gen. Davie, dated May 18th. The negotiation had been retarded by the indisposition of Joseph Buonaparte, the head of the French Com-



missioners and Tallien, one of the ministers. At the date of the letters they had recovered and their business was progressing slowly. However, we have good reason to believe that the negotiation was suspended in June. The intelligence comes by a late arrival from St. Sebastian.<sup>5</sup>

Great exertions are making by Mr. Baker, Blount, Macon, and a few others to have Gales<sup>6</sup> elected public printer in the place of our friend Mr. Hodge. This *gentleman Gales* is said to be by birth an Irishman, but it is certain that he lately conducted a weekly publication in Sheffield in England and came to America because he did not behave peaceably at home. It is certain that he was invited from Philadelphia to Raleigh by party men for party purposes. A letter of John G. Blount to Gen. Willis<sup>7</sup> of Lumberton is a sufficient proof of this,—this letter, owing to its reference to some land speculation on which (torn) has been brought in our Sup. Court was delivered in Mr. Brown's hands, where it now is. It opens to Gen. Willis the whole plan and congratulates him on the prospect, and refers to some consoling letters from his brother Tom. Pray listen & let me know what the members from your country think on the subject of State printer and inform me.

I am, dear sir,

Your,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury,  
N. Carolina.

<sup>1</sup> Either Hodge's "North Carolina Journal," at Halifax, or his "North Carolina Minerva and Raleigh Advertiser," at Raleigh. See an earlier note for Hodge's career as publisher.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Blount, candidate for Congress. See note to previous letter. Willis Alston, Republican, as was Blount, won an easy victory. Harris' distaste for Blount was probably more than political. He doubtless believed him guilty in the land fraud charges. Nevertheless the context seems to prove Blount an adroit politician and master of the weapons in use during the early ante-prohibition era. This may have accounted for his political recrudescence in 1805.

<sup>3</sup> Spoken in irony of Attorney-General Blake Baker, whom Harris seems to dislike equally with Blount.

<sup>4</sup> John Louis Taylor, of Cumberland, judge of Superior Court. David Stone, of Bertie, was the successful candidate before this assembly (Nov. 17-

Dec. 20, 1800) for the United States senate. He succeeded Timothy Bloodworth, and had Jesse Franklin, of Surry, as colleague. Both were Republicans.

<sup>5</sup> St. Sebastian, a Spanish port on the Northern, or Biscay, coast.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Gales, of Sheffield, England. Gales edited the *Sheffield Register* until 1796. Pitt's Treasonable Practices Bill and Seditious Meetings Bill of 1795 tended to curb the rights of the press in voicing the discontent of the English masses who were suffering from the burdens of the government's war against the French Revolution. Gales in consequence came to America and set up his paper at Philadelphia in 1796. Nathaniel Macon in 1799 induced him to come to Raleigh where he set up the *Raleigh Register* which at once became the organ of the Republican party in the state. The aggressiveness and the ability of the editor soon made his paper the leading journal in the state and greatly strengthened the dominance of the party whose cause he backed. Macon and other Republican leaders, in order to insure the permanence and strength of the paper, saw to it in the fall of 1800 that Gales was chosen by the Assembly, now Republican, as public printer over the Federalist Hodge, who had had the public printing since 1786. The Federalists fiercely resented and resisted this "abuse of patronage" by the Assembly but were impotent to prevent Hodge's deposition.

<sup>7</sup> Probably Colonel John Willis, of Lumberton, Robeson County, a Revolutionary patriot and commander of militia in the operations of General Greene against Cornwallis in 1780-81. He was frequently the representative of Robeson in the Assembly, in both houses, between 1787 and 1800.

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HALIFAX, Sept. 18, 1800.

DR. BROTHER,

Your letter of Aug. 26th I received last night, on my return from Martin Court. You complain that I do not write regularly to you, yet I cannot recollect that I have neglected to write you a letter at the time appointed for some months past and then my failure was owing to absence. You request to know the author of the *Law character's* speech, at New Bern. It is principally Mr. Shepperd<sup>1</sup> who is the Federal candidate in that District for Elector, tho' several other persons had their share in it. Citizen Hodge could not help adding a little, as far as relates to the subject of British Debts. The "Affair at Brantley" and "Anticipation," which were in the succeeding journal are to be ascribed to Mr. Hodge. The "proclamation" in this day's paper is Mr. Brown's, and "the further particulars of the late Battle at Raleigh" is mine; thus you have a general account of authorship<sup>2</sup> which you will use, I am certain with prudence. Mr. Baker was on a visit to Prince Edward in Virginia to see his wife's relations, and went at least thirty miles out of his way to receive a beating at Raleigh. I expected that the colouring in Boylan's letter was high, but on comparing it with the representation of

indifferent persons it appears altogether moderate, certain it is the attorney betrayed a most dastardly soul to receive four or five blows on his back without facing the danger. Mr. Sessums, his own champion, says he shed tears in the street before he got clear of the field of battle. Mr. Schenck, his friend from Tarboro says the Attorney was so dismayed at the first blow that he did not once raise his loaded whip. All condemn. Boylan is a very young man, about my height, but heavier and is much less than B. Baker. He is nephew to friend Hodge. I hope your part of the State will do everything possible to secure Mr. Hodge's election as State printer. The Jacobins have two great objects in view at the next general Assembly, one to elect B. Baker Senator of the U. States. He is a kind of Martyr to their cause. The other is to give the patronage of the state to a printer of violent anti-federal principles. As to the first, it is to be hoped that Blake's own stupidity, folly and cowardice will prevent their wishes. Never did a man lay himself open to so much merited censure as he has done by his late conduct. It ought to be published every where, and spoken of by every tongue. It only requires to be known and understood to be detested.

Our republican neighbours, the Virginians, have lately almost experienced the same blessed effects of their outrageous democratic whims.<sup>3</sup> The negroes in Richmond and its neighbourhood had combined to make a general slaughter of all the white males and elderly women. The younger were to be preserved for their wives, they had a bold adventurer at their head who was to assume the name of Buonaparte. They had prepared a vast number of pikes and fabricated arms of different kinds out of scythes, sickles, etc., which were concealed in their cabins, had provided funds, from which they in several instances gave as much as four dollars bounty to (torn) or enlist a fellow in their service. The plot was discovered only three days before it was to have been put into execution. The whole city was in arms, a great many apprehended. Several have already been executed. Buonaparte by the last accounts had not been taken, but had fled to



the woods in a complete suit of regimentals. Tho' nothing of this has transpired in the papers, it comes in a way that cannot be doubted.

I am, dear brother,

Most affectionately yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. Carolina.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably William Shepard, Esq. of New Bern, father of William Biddle Shepard, member of Congress 1829-1837, and of Charles Shepard, member of Congress 1837-1841.

<sup>2</sup> The titles so liberally interspersed in the above letter seem to refer to articles by the several gentlemen named, which doubtless appears in Hodge's Raleigh paper, The North Carolina Minerva and Raleigh Advertiser. The editor hasn't access to the paper of the dates upon which they probably appeared. Most or all of them were doubtless of a controversial character and Harris' contribution; "The further particulars of the late battle at Raleigh," must have been an account, colored in the interest of the Federalist, of an encounter between Blake Baker, the Attorney-General, and William Boylan, nephew of Hodge and co-editor of the *Minerva*. From the context it seems that the trouble grew out of the struggle over the question of the public printing, which the *Minerva* had and was about to lose to Gales of the opposite party and editor of the *Raleigh Register*. Boylan was a very partisan and aggressive Federalist and moreover had a financial interest at stake.

<sup>3</sup> Harris attributes every ill that affects the country to the rising tide of democracy. The reference here is to a slave rising in and around Richmond, planned by a slave named Gabriel Prosser, self-styled "Bonaparte." It was to have taken place September 1st, 1800. The rendezvous of the negro troops was to be a brook about six miles from Richmond. The force was to comprise eleven hundred slaves, divided into three divisions, and marching upon Richmond from as many sides, was to deliver a surprise night attack. The arsenal was to be the common objective point of the three divisions. Success here was to be followed by a call to arms of their fellow-slaves and friends of humanity throughout the continent. This well-conceived plot proved abortive. Gabriel was hunted down and captured in hiding on board the schooner, Mary, four miles down the James. September 23, 1800. His execution followed shortly.

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HALIFAX, Oct. 5, 1800.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have lately received several letters from you, the last dated Sept. 23rd. I feel myself much obliged to you for your attention. You have not for some time given me an account of your health.—Whether you yet weigh your 190 pounds,—as for myself I still linger in my dull way sometimes recovering—sometimes complaining. I have for three or four nights past been troubled by what I may call an ague



and fever, but it has no very uncomfortable attendants, except that it possesses me with an invincible aversion to sleep. Besides my professional engagements,—I am employed in repairing the lots and grounds which Mr. Brown and myself purchased sometime past, and in forming plans to accomodate myself on better terms in future, am sowing wheat and clover for pasture, building a kitchen, and so expect within a very few weeks, to have a boy and a negro woman on our lots. This will reduce the pain of our washing &c and the expense of horsefeed. It is right, and the only way to make life comfortable, always to be engaged in some plans. A few days ago I made a visit to Colonel Haynes,<sup>1</sup> an acquaintance of mine in Northampton, and uncle to Mrs. McCoy; he is now some years older than any of his family for some generations past have been known to be; he is of a weakly constitution, and has been lately reduced almost to a shadow by an indisposition which has lasted some months; he never had a child. After dinner he nearly exhausted himself walking through and explaining a large elegant building which he now has upon the stocks, this room he intended to make more elegant than any in the county, that would be a fine, cool summer retreat, a third would be an excellent dining room; here he intended to plant a tree to shade a window, there to set out an arbour,—in short he planned and explained everything as if he had the most perfect assurance of living there for three score years to come, or felt the blood of youth warm and active in his veins. Poor man! I am certain, that instead of living to occupy his palace, the first mansion he will remove to, will be his coffin, instead of enjoying the shade of his trees and arbours. He will never live to see them put forth their first leaves. Yet I do not blame him, life by such castle-building is dragged on with some comfort, when it might otherwise be entirely insupportable.

Last evening letters were received here from General Davie dated as far back as June 14th. As usual they contain nothing that respects the mission of the envoy, but it is ob-

served in one, that he expects to arrive in America, nearly as soon as the letter. It has had a long passage, perhaps the conjectures printed in Hodge's paper of tomorrow are not altogether unfounded, that the tardiness of the negotiation proceed from some view which the French government has to the ensuing election of President.<sup>2</sup> Our friend Hodge is not yet returned from New York. I expect he will be here within three weeks. I received \$10 by Colonel Ashe<sup>3</sup> for General Davie.

I am, dear brother,

Most affectionately yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

My respects to Mr. Torrence and family.

Halifax, N. C.

Oct. 6th, 1800.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Salisbury, N. Carolina.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Eaton Haynes of Northampton County, member of the 4th Carolina Provincial Congress, which met at Halifax the 4th of April, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> The Federalists generally suspected the French government (now the Consulate) to be wilfully laggard in its negotiations with our Commissioners with the view of influencing favorably the Republican party's fortunes in the November election for president. This no doubt did enter into the consideration of First Consul Bonaparte to some extent.

<sup>3</sup> John Baptista Ashe (b. 1758, d. 1802), son of Governor Samuel Ashe (governor from 1795 to 1798, 3 terms). John B. Ashe was a resident of Halifax and had been a distinguished Revolutionary patriot and soldier. He had fought at Alamance in the Regulator War of 1771; he was a lieutenant-colonel under General Greene at the battle of Eutaw in 1781; he was a member of the Continental Congress in 1787-88; a member of the 1st and 2nd Congresses under the present constitution, and elected governor of the state in 1802 but died before he assumed office.

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HALIFAX, Dec. 5th, 1802.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR BROTHER,

I received not long since your letter informing me that you had become postmaster.<sup>2</sup> I shall duly attend to its contents as often as I am at home. It gives me great pleasure and no small degree of pride to hear that my nephew Charles<sup>3</sup> continues in good health and grows apace. I am confident that

the prudence of my sister and yourself will give his infancy and youth such treatment as will harden both his body and mind for the rough vicissitudes of manhood. No greater curses in this life await a man than a feeble mind or puny constitution. I hope your dispute with your father will soon terminate; I cannot, tho' disposed to judge most favorably, think you are altogether free from blame in the business. Otherwise the affair would have been settled long ago. When with you I observed with no inconsiderable pain, that you had not made the conciliatory graces (if I may so call them) either your study or practice. The good will of every man is worth something and it is often to be acquired by the most trifling attentions than by a more solid purchase.

Let me hear of your family frequently, how the town progresses, if business increases, be assured that everything connected in any measure with your interest cannot fail to be most acceptable information to me. Present my best respects to my sister Abby.<sup>4</sup>

I am,

Brother,

Most affectionately yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris, Merchant,  
Sneedsboro, N. Carolina.

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<sup>4</sup> It is unfortunate that the two-year hiatus in Charles Harris' letters to his brother cannot be filled at present, though they may yet appear from some unknown source. It would have been particularly interesting to have had his comment upon the election of Jefferson and the general eclipse of the Federalist cause in 1801.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Wilson Harris was now post-master and merchant at Sneedsboro, a new town situated on the Yadkin, or Peedee River, in Anson county, near the South Carolina line. The town is now defunct, but it had early hopes and prospects of a vigorous life. As late as 1818 a stock company was formed to boom the place, with the expectation of developing navigation on the Peedee above and below, thus securing the trade of a large territory northward in the Yadkin Valley. Also it expected to draw trade from the eastward toward Fayetteville, which was then a trade center on the Cape Fear, and from the westward toward Charlotte. Archibald D. Murphy, the "father" of internal improvements in North Carolina was a shareholder in the enterprise to boom Sneedsboro and its chief promoter, it being a "slide enterprise" of the Yadkin Navigation Company, which was organized in July, 1818, with Murphy as president. In 1819 Murphy confidently expected Sneedsboro to be the great inland town of the state. These bright hopes were doomed to disappointment. Soon after Murphy's death in 1832 the "town" disappeared from the map.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Wilson Harris, born to Robert Wilson Harris and his wife, Abigail Hackett Harris, April, 1802. The young Harris here introduced was the eldest child of Robert Harris and later became a most useful citizen of the state. At early manhood he entered Princeton and remained some years, then studied medicine and becoming a physician settled for practice at his grandfather's old place at "Mill Grove," on Rocky River in Cabarrus. In 1828 he married Mary Barringer, sister of General Rufus Barringer, of Judge Victor Barringer of the Foreign Court, at Cairo, Egypt, and of Daniel Moreau Barringer, representative in Congress, 1843-1849, Minister of the United States to Spain under the Taylor-Fillmore Administration, and Delegate to the Peace Congress of 1861 on the eve of the Civil War. From the union of Charles Wilson Harris and Mary Barringer sprang a family of twelve children, the fifth of whom was Harriett Hackett Harris, who married Captain A. J. Seagle and died in Chapel Hill, December 1914, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. A. C. McIntosh.

<sup>4</sup> Abigail O'Neil Hackett, wife of Robert W. Harris.

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HALIFAX, May 22nd, 1803.

DR. BROTHER,

I set off in a few days for Norfolk, & shall endeavor to find my way to Bermuda or the Bahamas.<sup>1</sup> In a second will I have left you my Executor & so arranged the business that you can complete it at one journey. My will is in Mr. Brown's possession. He has promised to have it proved. Should I rest my bones in the delightful climate I steer for, you can come down at a succeeding court and settle all.

I carry between \$700 & 800 with me.

I have empowered Mr. Brown to receive the following sums for me:—

In Northampton	£ 25
In Martin	£ 6
Court of Equity	£ 50
From Const. (able) Alsbrooke	£ 13
In Halifax	£ 22
In Halifax Sup.	£ 57
From Const. (able) Horton	£ 50
I left bond with (———?)	£119
Accts. worth	£92 19s 6d

And Mr. Brown owes me by promissory note 264£ 10s, amounting to 699£ 9s 6d. I have stated this for your satisfaction; some small loss is to be expected in several of the items. Besides on my books, horse, chair, harness and bed.



The little negro girl,<sup>2</sup> I could not provide for her in my absence and sold her to the owner of her father.

I have been entirely incapable of attending to electioneering subjects, but I may safely pronounce that if Alston and Jacocks (republicans) both stand a poll,<sup>3</sup> Gen. Davie will be elected.

Present my best respects to Abby.

I am, Your brother,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,

(P. Master)

Sneedsboro, N. Carolina.

<sup>1</sup> Charles W. Harris sailed from Norfolk on the 3rd of July for the Bahamas, where he trusted the climate would favorably affect his now rapidly declining health. Unconsciously this letter carries much of pathos, since it presents a brave spirit, well aware of his meagre chances for life, setting his affairs in order for the end. His sojourn at Nassau, in the Bahamas proved disappointing in its effects upon his malady (tuberculosis) and he returned to North Carolina in the latter part of the year, going to his brother's home at Sneedsboro, where he died, January 15th. 1804, in the thirty-third year of his age.

<sup>2</sup> This little girl was evidently a slave purchased by Harris to look after his comfort in the bachelor's home he had established in a house built by him in 1800 upon a part of the property owned at that time with Mr. Brown, his friend and fellow-attorney in Halifax. Presumably he had now sold his share in this real estate to Brown, this accounting for the promissory note for 264 pounds and 10 shillings referred to above.

<sup>3</sup> In the Congressional election of August, 1803, (8th Congress) Willis Alston, representative of the Halifax District since 1799, had a rival aspirant in his own party that threatened to divide the party strength and give the district to the Federalists. The danger of Republican defeat was the greater in that General Wm. R. Davie, the strong man of his party in the state, was the Federalist contestant for the seat. His friends generally expected Davie's great popularity and the Republican division to be decisive in their candidate's favor. However, their hopes were destined to disappointment. Nathaniel Macon, state Republican leader, and speaker of the National House of Representatives since 1801, interested himself in the situation (See Dodd, Life of Nathaniel Macon, 181). Jacocks was influenced to withdraw, thus giving Alston a clear field against Davie with the result that the latter was beaten. He now retired from public life and two years later gave up his practice of law for quiet repose upon his South Carolina estate, Tivoli, near Lancaster.

BAHAMAS,

NEW PROVIDENCE. NASSAU,<sup>1</sup> July 17, 1803.

DEAR BROTHER,

I arrived here safely on the 14th inst. with the short passage of eleven days, without meeting any Frenchmen.<sup>2</sup>

I have not been here long enough to shake off the effects of my voyage, or to form any conjecture respecting the operation of the climate on my constitution. I feel the heat excessive, no rain, everything parched up.

The news of war<sup>3</sup> has been here about eight days. I am told it has produced a great alteration for the better. It has given life to business; before the schooner in which I came anchored, we had a press gang aboard<sup>4</sup> which took all the white sailors except one.

I wish I could enclose some of the fruits which abound here. Present me to sister Abby and Charles.

Yours,

CHARLES W. HARRIS.

Mr. Robert W. Harris,  
Post-Master.  
Sneedsborough,  
N. Carolina.  
U. States.

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<sup>1</sup> See note 1 to preceding letter.

<sup>2</sup> See note 4 below.

<sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Amiens, March 25, 1802, had brought the first lull in hostilities between England and France since 1793. And this peace was only temporary. May 18, 1803, England declared war anew upon France and did not again sheath her sword until Napoleon's first abdication, April 11, 1814.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Harris sailed from Norfolk for Nassau upon an English ship, hence the reference to the impressment of the crew of his vessel as well as the inferential fear of meeting a French vessel. Nevertheless, England did not now long content herself with impressment of the soldiers of her own merchant marine into service, but began that course with English subjects found in merchant service under the flag of the United States, thus making up one of the issues which led to the War of 1812.

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I arrived here<sup>1</sup> on Sunday last after a tolerable agreeable journey of two weeks. I am well pleased with the rout and shall always prefer it. I wrote from Fayetteville inclosing one thousand dollars with directions to whom to pay it, which I hope you received. I have not sold a bale of cotton nor is there a prospect of doing it very soon. I shall probably purchase very few goods. It will not however occasion any dis-appointment in the payment of the money I owe. I expect in a few days to receive a letter from you to hear from my

dear family. Kiss our dear little children, tell them I love them as much as if I saw them every day and that I will bring them pretty little books and good shoes. I am my dear Abby with the most sincere love your affectionate

Husband

ROBT. W. HARRIS.

Mrs. Robt. W. Harris,  
Sneedsboro, N. C.  
Anson County.

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was furnished to the collection by Mrs. A. C. McIntosh, of Chapel Hill, a great-grand-daughter of the writer, Robert Wilson Harris. It was written from Philadelphia and, though without date, must be placed between 1802. when he became a resident at Sneedsboro, and the date of his death there in 1812, probably nearer the latter.





THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

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SOME COLONIAL HISTORY OF BEAUFORT COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA

CHAPEL HILL  
PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY  
1916

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SOME COLONIAL HISTORY OF BEAUFORT COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA

BY  
FRANCIS HODGES COOPER

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# Some Colonial History of Beaufort County, North Carolina<sup>1</sup>

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## GEOGRAPHY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND RESOURCES OF THE COUNTY.

In dealing with the history of any nation, country, state, county, or place, one cannot usually account for the past events of the section with which he deals if he has not considered the physiography of that section. Therefore, before we look at some aspects of the history of colonial Beaufort County, it is necessary that we take a good survey of the physiography of the county.

Beaufort County lies in the tidal plain section of Eastern North Carolina, embracing in its boundaries that arm of Pamlico Sound known as Pamlico River. The county is bounded on the north by Martin and Washington counties; on the east by Hyde and Pamlico counties; on the south by Pamlico and Craven counties, and on the west by Craven and Pitt counties. Its area is 819 square miles, being nearly 300 square miles larger than the average for the counties of the state.

Owing to the nearness of the county to the Atlantic Ocean, the height of the county above sea-level varies from about forty feet on the western border to about nine or ten feet in the extreme eastern part. The general surface of the county is level; there are no hills more than ten feet high, with the possible exception of a river or creek bank. On account of the general levelness of the county the rivers and creeks are broad and shallow, the deep water being found only in very limited channels. The one great river, which traverses the whole length of Beaufort County, is known as the Pamlico below Washington, and as the Tar above that city. The other river, which drains part of the county and which forms the eastern boundary between Beaufort and Hyde counties, is the Pungo River. The names of these three rivers are the sole remaining monuments of the Pampticough, the Tau, and the Matchapungo tribes of Indians whom the first settlers found living where we live today. The other

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<sup>1</sup>This paper was awarded the first prize in the Colonial Dames contest for 1915.

streams of importance are Tranters Creek in the western part of the county, on the north side of Pamlico River, being tributary to it, and South Creek on the south side of the river, and also a tributary to the Pamlico. The soil of the county presents a variation from very sandy, on the Pitt side, to a very dark loam on the Hyde and Pamlico side. In passing from the sandy loam on the west to the black loam of the east, different varieties of clayey soil and stiff, closely compacted soil are everywhere to be found. The subsoil is invariably clay of different textures.

The flat nature of the land leaves the county without the natural resources of waterpower. The few instances in which waterpower is used are examples of the wasteful flooding of large tracts of "lowground" land, in several cases a six-foot fall of water necessitating the inundation of from three to even fifteen square miles of land. There are no minerals found in the county, but there are extensive deposits of marl at no very great depth, and good fire-clays are to be found all through the middle section of the county. Marl is dug on both sides of the river, both above and below Washington, and there are several kilns where terra cotta tiling and a good quality of brick are burnt. Sand is abundant, and the number of uses to which concrete is put is thus materially increased.

Until the advent of the portable steam sawmill the forest resources of the county were unsurpassed by any other section of the state. There were once large primeval forests of pitch and yellow pine, as is evinced by the fact that Washington shipped a large amount of naval stores in the years preceding and immediately following the Civil War. These forests have since been largely cut, being the source of much wealth to the county. There are also large areas of swamps timbered with fine growths of cypress and black and sweet gums. Junipers are also abundant in many sections of the county. Oaks of many varieties, maples, ashes, poplars, and elms are very abundant, some of them being of such abundance as to be of considerable commercial value. The shrubs, plants, flowers, roots, and herbs of the county are almost innumerable.

There is one other great natural resource of the county that furnished employment for its full share of the population of the

county, and which is the source of considerable wealth. This is the fish and oyster industry of this section. Being situated on a large river flowing into a sound, which in its turn connects with the Atlantic, the county has at all times of the year a very large run of both salt and freshwater fish. Shad, herring, trout, blue fish, spots, mackerel, mullets, and a long list of the more common freshwater fish are to be found on the markets in season. Oysters are usually plentiful except in May, June, July, and August, the weather being too warm in these months to permit of oysters and clams being transported very far from the place where they are caught. The oysters, fish, and game shipped to northern markets from Beaufort County are considered the earliest and finest-flavored of any received.

With such a location, with such a goodly number of navigable rivers, with such a variety of soils, with immense forests, with good building sands and clays, with such valuable fisheries—in fact, with every natural resource except minerals and an abundance of water-power, and being possessed of such a mild climate, it is no wonder, then, that what is now Beaufort County was attractive to the early settlers of North Carolina.

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## FORMATION AND EARLY HISTORY.

The history of the present county of Beaufort really began at a period earlier than 1705, in which year, at a meeting of the Governor, Charles Eden, and Thomas Pollock, Samuel Swann, John Arderne, and Edward Moseley, deputies of the Lords Proprietors, it was decided that “whereas the county of Bath, is now grown populous and daily encreasing, do hereby think fit and it is hereby ordered, that three Precincts be erected in the said county, bounded as follows, viz.: The precinct of Pampticough [now Beaufort and Pitt counties,] lying on the north side of Pampticough River and beginning at Moline’s Creek, and westerly to the head of the river. The Precinct of Wickham, beginning at the said Moline’s Creek, so including all the lands and Rivers from said Creek to Matchepungo Bluff; and the Precinct of Archdale taking all the south side of



said river, and at present, including all the Inhabitants of Newse."<sup>2</sup> The same statute, it might be remarked in passing, gave each of these precincts two members in the Assembly.

Prior to this time all that territory south of the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River was known as Bath County. Really the limits and authority of the county extended only about as far as the colonists had pushed westward, which, roughly speaking, was about 75 miles inland, usually along the navigable rivers. Bath was by far the largest county ever created within the state, for when an early county was formed, the western limit of the county was considered to terminate in the western boundary of the colony.<sup>3</sup> These western boundaries sometimes called for a stretch of territory from the Atlantic to the mountains, or from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, or from the Atlantic to the Southern (Pacific) Ocean. In this case, Bath County embraced a vast belt of land reaching across the present United States. By comparing it with a present-day map of North Carolina, we find that Bath County really contained and exerted jurisdiction over all or parts of Dare, Tyrrell, Washington, Martin, Pitt, Beaufort, Hyde, Pamlico, Craven, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Duplin, Onslow, Carteret, Pender, Sampson, and New Hanover counties. Considering only these counties, what a princely domain would Bath County have been, had it only been more populous!

Besides the county of Bath, Albemarle was the other great county in the colony. These two counties in 1705 comprised the whole of what is now North Carolina, and more besides. Albemarle was the first to be peopled, settlers pushing down from Virginia and planting the first permanent settlement in the region north of Albemarle Sound. From this same source, and often by way of these Albemarle settlements, the settlements around Pamlico Sound were made. The people making the settlements were usually English, even when they came from the New England colonies, as a good many did. The names of the people who applied for land titles are good English names, with the occasional appearance of a French name. The English people came for social and economic, and not for religious reasons, as did the French Huguenots who settled in

<sup>2</sup>*C. R.*, II, 629.

<sup>3</sup>Clark, *Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War*, "Booklet," v. 2.



Bath and Albemarle. All of us know that there is no Bath County today, and just so there is no Albemarle County. The names of the two oldest counties in the state have been lost, with the exception of the name of a town in one case and the name of a town and sound in the other. Bath County, formed in 1696, named in honor of the Earl of Bath (the head of the Lords Proprietors), divided in 1705 into precincts, finally ceased to exist even in mention.

Beaufort County was formed in 1705. It was visited in 1709 by Lawson, and two years later it was a witness to and a chief sufferer in the Indian uprisings of 1711. It was the seat of the Proprietary Governor, Charles Eden, who lived for a short time at Bath, about 1715. Just about this time it was visited by Teache, and in 1717 it was the county to which this pirate was brought after being killed. Fort Reading, the name given to a fort which was established near the present site of the town of Washington, was established during the second decade of the eighteenth century. In 1715, Bath, the principal town in the county, was made a port of entry, thus tending to increase the commerce of the county. In 1734, St. Thomas Church, at Bath Town, was completed, being not then the first Episcopal church in the colony, but being now the oldest church which stands essentially as it was erected. In 1738 the legislature recognized the will of the people, and called the county by the name of Beaufort. This name had been chosen by the people some time before, but only now were the boundaries of the different counties, so promiscuously referred to in the Colonial Records, run out by special enactment of the legislature. The people were unusually well pleased with Henry, Duke of Beaufort, one of the Lords Proprietors, and a Palatine, and it was for him that they called the old precinct of Pampticough. Exactly how early the people affixed some other name to this region is unknown, but Pampticough is not entered at all on Lawson's map of 1709. Between the years 1740 and 1760 the people of Beaufort were undisturbed, except for the outbreak of the French and Indian War. They furnished their share of the militia sent from North Carolina against the French and the Indians. In 1760, upon a petition of the people concerned, the western part of the county was cut off and formed into Pitt County and St. Michael's parish, Tranters Creek being the dividing

line between the two counties then as now. The years 1760-1775 were years of healthy growth, both in numbers, in religious ideas, and in the love of peace, liberty, and freedom, for as Wheeler<sup>4</sup> says, "the inhabitants of Beaufort were distinguished for their early devotion to the principles of liberty," as is proved by the fact that Beaufort was well represented and her representatives well instructed at the congresses which met at Halifax, New Bern, and Hillsborough.<sup>5</sup>

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### TROUBLES WITH THE INDIANS.

Within two years after John Lawson, our earliest historian, made the assertion that of all the colonies, North Carolina was the only one that had been established without bloodshed, the greater portion of Eastern North Carolina was plunged into the throes of a bitter struggle with the Indians, which followed immediately upon the terrible attempt of the savages to prevent the white man from encroaching upon the hunting grounds of the Indian. Once in a while a white man would harm an Indian, and the revengeful and relentless Red Man would retaliate by killing the settler. Once in a while, tempted by some worldly possession of the white man's, the Indian would kill the white man, and be brought to justice in the courts of the little colony if he was ever caught up with. How different was the Indian Massacre of 1711, and how much more interesting to us should this be than a study of the troubles with the Indians of Kentucky or Florida or Massachusetts. Because of its local interest, it should be especially interesting to every citizen of Beaufort and Craven counties.

Different reasons have been assigned as the cause of the trouble of 1711, but the chief causes, everything else set aside, were the steady encroachments of the whites upon the hunting and fishing grounds of the Indians, though the struggles of the whites among themselves as a result of the Carey Rebellion, which had been quelled only a little before, may have exerted a baneful influence upon the sanguinary Indians. Some of the contemporary writers

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<sup>4</sup>*Historical Sketches of North Carolina*, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup>Though I have not mentioned each reference specifically in the running recital of events in the county, I have looked each one carefully up, and find my statements substantiated in each case, usually by the Colonial Records.

say that both Carey and Roach, his subordinate, were influential in persuading the Indians to make the attack upon the white settlements. This last reason is advanced by Dr. Hawks in the first volume of his history, and is a little shaky as far as proof is concerned, but it is sufficient to say that the two first causes would have been sufficient to bring on the war. The fact remains that the war did break out, and that the people living on the Tar and Pamlico rivers, and those living in the vicinity of Bath, were the heaviest sufferers. Mr. Urmstone, writing to the Secretary of the S. P. G., says that Bath "is now the seat of war,"<sup>6</sup> and later as well as contemporary writers say that the struggle was severest in what is now Beaufort County.

Had the Indians not been inferior to the whites in their capacity for strategy and concerted action, and had they been equipped and armed even as well as the colonists were, the settlements planted here before 1711 would surely have been wiped out of existence. They were immensely superior to the whites in numbers, for according to Judge Clark, the Indians could muster around eighteen hundred fighting men, whereas the colonists could gather only about a thousand men capable of bearing arms.<sup>7</sup> This latter number was smaller than it should have been, owing to the decreased numbers due to the troubles with Carey. On the side of the Indians, by far the greatest number was furnished by the Tuscaroras, who were the leaders in the movement to massacre the whites, and who assumed the work of the extermination of the Indians along the southern bank of the Roanoke, and especially along the Tar and Pamlico rivers. This was the home and hunting grounds of the Tuscaroras. On the north side of Albemarle Sound and the Roanoke River lived the Meherrins, Notoways, Chowanokes, Pasquotanks, Connamax, and Yeopims,<sup>8</sup> who were not very formidable, being considerably outnumbered by the whites in that section of the colony. The Pamlicos, it appears, were to labor with the Tuscaroras in slaughtering the whites above Bath and along the Pamlico and Tar rivers, while the Mattamuskeets were to surprise the settlements to the east of Bath. The Cotechneys and the Cores, from whom Core Sound draws its

<sup>6</sup>*C. R.*, I, 885.

<sup>7</sup>*Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War*. "Booklet," v. 2.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*



name, were to massacre the Swiss and the Palatines at New Bern. To all appearances, the plot was a general one, considering the fact that it was to begin at sunrise on the day before the new moon in September, which was the 23d of the month. According to this, the massacre began at sunrise of the 22d, as was ever afterwards remembered in the colony.

On the 21st the Tuscaroras and their allies began to spread through the colonies in order to make the attack, which was to begin next morning, all the more concerted, and to carry it through with dispatch. The settlers little suspected treachery from the increased numbers of Indians, who merely asked for bread. The next morning, however, just as the sun rose, the red men began their hellish work, and in a few hours several hundred perished. Some account of the atrocities committed and the general pitilessness of the cruel Indian may be found in a letter from Christopher Gale to his sister, under the date of November 2, 1711.<sup>9</sup> They are as revolting as could be imagined, and I venture the assertion that they could be repeated today only by a savage people. Most of the outlying settlements in our county were surprised, the inhabitants, of all ages and races and of both sexes, being killed, being often treated as was the family of a certain Mr. Nevill, who lived a short distance from Bath.<sup>10</sup> Not all of the settlers were killed, for a goodly number gathered wherever there was a fortified place. Crowds from what is now Beaufort County flocked to Bath and to Fort Reading, near where Washington now stands. The Indians did not bury the bodies of their victims, merely mutilating them terribly, and leaving them "for prey to the dogs and wolves and vultures," whilst the care of the settlers was to strengthen their garrisons and to secure those still alive.

Though slaughter continued for a space of three days,<sup>11</sup> during which time Governor Hyde tried to put an end to some of the barbarity, his efforts were almost futile, for the Governor was able to raise only about one hundred and sixty men, owing to the necessity for garrisons, to the fact that a great many of the colonists were Quakers who would not fight, and to the fact that a good

<sup>9</sup>*C. R.*, I, 826-827.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*Indian Massacre and the Tuscarora War*. "Booklet," v. 2.



part of all who were able had fled to Virginia. Hyde could get no assistance from the friendly Indians, so general and widespread was the conspiracy of the Tuscaroras. Aid was sought from Virginia and South Carolina, though the chief thing accomplished by the Virginia troops was the liberation of Baron de Graffenreid, who, together with John Lawson and his servants, had been taken prisoner on the 22d of September, and who, unlike poor Lawson, had not been put to death. The Virginia troops may have overawed the Indians, and thus aided in checking their depredations to some extent. The greatest and most material aid came from our southern sister, South Carolina, for the assembly of that colony voted to send Colonel Barnwell with 600 militia and some 350 Indians. These reinforcements made good progress over the wilderness which then separated the two Carolinas, and Colonel Barnwell, on the 28th of January, 1712, after having driven the Indians to a palisaded fort about twenty miles above New Bern, and after surrounding and killing a good number of the Indians, both inside and outside the fort, agreed to a capitulation and treaty with them, instead of utterly crushing their power as the people desired and expected him to do.<sup>12</sup> This treaty which Barnwell made he allowed his allied Indians to break and to carry off a large number of captives to South Carolina to be sold into West Indian servitude. Thus the hatred and animosity of the aborigines was only aggravated, and their power was far from broken. Colonel Barnwell had to give up his command on account of a wound received in the encounter at Fort Barnwell, so called after the captor of the fort rather than being named for some defender.

It appears that Virginia prepared to help the North Carolinians in their distress, but that when they heard of Barnwell's treaty with the Tuscaroras they refused to act against the Indians for fear of incurring their hatred. However, when the Assembly, on March 12, 1712, voted 4,000 pounds sterling for the purpose of carrying on the war, and when the Assembly petitioned both South Carolina and Virginia, the South Carolinians were the only ones who helped us. Judge Clark says that this second time South

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<sup>12</sup>*C. R.*, I, 840.

Carolina sent Colonel James Moore with fifty white soldiers and about a thousand Indians to aid us, and the records show that Virginia voted 3,500 pounds to aid in carrying on the war, and 600 pounds to buy blankets and other supplies for our troops. Governor Hyde had died on the 8th of September, and Thomas Pollock had been elected to fill his place, being given the title of President. President Pollock made a treaty with Tom Blunt, one of the less hostile chiefs of the Tuscaroras, by which a good part of the southern and eastern Indians were led to side with the English. Thus aided from abroad, with finances strengthened, and with power in the newly-created allies, the people of the colony prepared to make a last desperate attempt to break the power of the Indians.

Moore came early in December, 1712, and, owing to the trouble in getting food, Pollock asked Moore to march his men into the Albemarle country. Even there the scarcity of food was great, and it was with difficulty that the Indians were kept from mutinying. About the middle of January, 1713, Moore led his Indians to Fort Reading, in our county, where they remained encamped on account of snow until the 4th of February. Early in February, Moore, together with the militia which North Carolina had furnished, and with his Indians and fifty whites, laid siege to Nahucke, the Indian stronghold in Greene County, near where Snow Hill now stands. The Indians failed to dig wells in the fort, and Moore, noticing this, cut off their supply of water. He then stormed the fort and took it, together with 800 prisoners, after having killed a large number; the allied Carolina forces lost only about 140 in killed and wounded, about 95 of them being Indians.<sup>13</sup> The Indian allies, after having taken their prisoners, left Moore, as they left Barnwell before him, only about 140 remaining. But the power of the Indians in Eastern Carolina was broken; the greater part of the Tuscaroras, together with some smaller tribes, joined the Five Nations of the North in New York, being henceforth known as the Six Nations. Except for a few sallies made by a small tribe for the next year or two there was not much more war. Thanks to South Carolina and the Yemassee Indians, we had been saved.

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<sup>13</sup>*Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War.* "Booklet," v. 2.

Beaufort County, besides being in the hottest of the trouble, and consequently one of the heaviest sufferers, was one of the sections of the State which did all it could to quell the savage butchery of the whites by the Indians. Beaufort also furnished her full share of the recruits who were with Moore at Nahucke when the Tuscarora power was broken, for it was the most thickly settled portion of the colony besides the Albemarle sections, and, unlike this section, it did not have very many Quakers to object to the war. Thus the part we played in this first struggle for existence was as great in proportion as the part the Beaufort County boys played in the struggle for freedom from England and in the struggle for our rights during the Civil War.

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#### THE TOWNS OF COLONIAL BEAUFORT COUNTY.

It has long been one of our boasts that Beaufort County contains the oldest incorporated town in the State; all of us know that Bath enjoys this distinction. Its history dates almost as far back as does the history of the county itself. The streets and the houses of the quaint old town seem to transport us back into the long-past, much-storied years in which North Carolina was a British colony, and when Bath was as large as any other town within the limits of the colony.

"Sixteen miles from what is now the town of Washington," says Mr. W. L. Peele,<sup>14</sup> "and within the limits of what is now Beaufort County, the [Pamlico] river widens out into an arm of the Pamlico Sound some five or six miles from shore to shore, and sends northward a short estuary into which flows Bath Creek, known among the early settlers as 'Old Town Creek,' and also as Pampticough Creek. In 1696 the homes of the settlers, as they increased in numbers, converged toward a central village situated on the east bank of this creek, about a mile and a half from its mouth. First the settlement and afterwards the village was called Pampticough. In 1681 a 'plantation or plot of ground containing twelve thousand acres, more or less,' was conveyed to Seth Sothel.

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<sup>14</sup>Notes on Bath, North Carolina Day Program, 1914.



This plantation included the village then 'commonly called Pampticough Town.' "

This was a description of the town before its incorporation. It is certain that the town was incorporated in 1705, and that its name was then changed from Pampticough to Bath. This first act of incorporation dates from the 8th of March, 1705.<sup>15</sup> The corporate limits of the town embraced sixty acres. This act of 1705 has been lost, but a quotation from the act of 1715, which repeated a part of the original act, is as follows: "Whereas, at the request of Mr. John Lawson, Mr. Joel Martin and others, a certain tract of land purchased by themselves, lying in [on] the Old Town Creek in Pampticough, and containing by estimation sixty acres, \* \* \* being part of a large tract then belonging to one David Perkins, but now in the tenure and possession and belonging to Col. Thomas Cary, \* \* \* was incorporated and made a township by an act of the General Assembly, made and ratified at the house of Captain John Hacklefield, the 8th day of March, 1705, \* \* \* be it enacted by his Excellency, the Palatine, and the rest of the True and Absolute Lords Proprietors of Carolina, by and with the advice and consent of this Present General Assembly, \* \* \* and by the authority of the same, that the said land be and is hereby henceforward invested in Mr. John Porter, Mr. Joel Martin, Mr. Thomas Harding, and Capt. John Drinkwater, or any two of them, to and for the use aforesaid and declared and confessed, and incorporated into a township by the name of Bath Town, with all the privileges and immunities hereafter expressed."<sup>16</sup> These privileges and immunities were of a municipal nature, and aside from the provision for the erection of a courthouse, they were similar to the affairs settled by the municipal authorities or the townsmen of today. A part of this same act of 1705 is taken up with an enactment for the preservation and best use of the Bath Library.

This Bath Library was the gift of the Reverend Thomas Bray, philanthropist and founder of the Corporation for the Establishing of the Christian Religion. It was the first library ever seen in the limits of North Carolina, and was valued at 100 pounds. Be-

<sup>15</sup>S. R., XXIII, 73.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*



fore the incorporation of Bath, the library had traveled up and down the county, and had apparently been abused and a part of the volumes misplaced, judging from the tenor of the act for the regulation of the library. The men appointed as trustees of the library were the most influential men of the county, showing that even if a greater part of the people were indifferent toward the library and unappreciate of the benefits to accrue from its use, the people in charge of governmental affairs, and the higher classes generally, were not irresponsible to the appeals of culture and learning. What finally became of the Bath Library is not definitely known.

Bath was soon made a port of entry and the seat of government.<sup>17</sup> Its being made a port of entry was the result of the growing trade of Bath, which in turn was due to the depth of water in Ocracoke Inlet, which was greater than most of the shallow inlets on our coast. Bath was more centrally located than Edenton, but it was still inconveniently located for the settlers along the Cape Fear, and for this reason the seat of government did not remain long in our quaint little town. Governor Eden lived there in 1714; Christopher Gale had lived there since about 1710; Teach had had a house just across the creek, almost fronting the palace of the proprietary governor. Near the apex of the rising ground on which Bath is built, on what was once the land of Joseph Bonner, there can be seen the remains of the fort to which the inhabitants of the surrounding country fled on the outbreak of the Indian massacre of 1711. Owing to its trade, Bath began to be a flourishing town about 1725. It was located on the road running from Nansemond River, in Virginia, by the way of Edenton, Mackey's Point, Plymouth, Bath, and New Bern, to Wilmington. Thus it was in touch with Virginia and the southern colonists by land as well as by water.<sup>18</sup>

In 1734 St. Thomas Church, the oldest original religious edifice in the State, was completed. It is a quaint building, a little above one story in height, not having a steeple. It is built with thick walls, despite the fact that the bricks in the walls, as well as the tiles of the floor, were brought from England. There is a story

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<sup>17</sup>*C. R.*, III, xviii.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

that the bell of the church, though it has been cracked and recast, was the gift of Queen Anne, and though I cannot find a record to prove this, it is safe to suppose that it may have been given by the English queen. However irresponsible a person may be to the appeal of the past, he can hardly see and enter and walk down the same aisles that were trod by the quaintly costumed people of two centuries ago; he can hardly read the inscriptions cut in the slabs let into the walls of the old church and not feel that he has been transported into the bygone days of colonial Beaufort County, and not feel a realization, an inspiration and a thankfulness to our forefathers for their inestimable services as pioneers.

Situated on the principal street of Bath today is perhaps the oddest house in the whole county. It is known as the old Marsh House, though the Marshes were not the original owners. It was built in 1744 by Monsieur Cataunch for a Mr. and Mrs. Whitmore.<sup>19</sup> The Whitmores had a niece, it is related, one Mary Evans, whose husband was lost at sea. This niece, according to a curiously carved tombstone still to be seen in the rear of the old house, died with a broken heart on account of the loss of her husband. However this may be, the Whitmores moved away, many thinking that their leaving was due to their grief, so closely were they attached to Mrs. Evans. Thus the house passed from the hands of its original owners, being purchased by a Mr. Marsh, a wealthy ship-owner and merchant of the town, whose descendants still own the place. The chief peculiarity of construction of the house is the chimney, seventeen feet wide, with windows and tiled floors in it. Evidently the building of a chimney was not then the item in house construction that it is today. The house is frame, of course, and the sills have been found to be pitch pine heart covered with tar and wrapped in canvas—merely another example of how substantially our forefathers built. There are numerous other places of interest at Bath, particularly the sight of two old cannon, visible only at low tide, lying buried in the mud at the edge of the water—the harmless rusty memorials of the days when Bath had a fort, or of the advent and passing of that bold buccaneer, Edward Teach, more commonly known as “Black Beard.”

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<sup>19</sup>Rodman, *Historic Homes and People of Old Bath Town*. “Booklet,” v. 2.

Bath was the seat of government of Bath County until the county ceased to exist, when it became the seat of government of Beaufort, remaining the county seat until the removal of the government to the present seat, Washington, in 1785. The courthouse, jail, and pillory, which had been built in accordance with the act of 1715, used all to stand at Bath. They were removed upon the petition of a majority of the citizens of the county, for Washington was already outstripping Bath in its progress. Court was early held at Bath; Christopher Gale, Chief Justice of the county, held court there as early as March 31, 1713.<sup>20</sup> Other courts, other court officers, and other men came and acted their parts and passed off the stage whereon was acted the drama of the history of Bath Town. No other place in North Carolina is quite so romantic, so antique, as dear old Bath, for even if Mr. Whitefield did curse it, as the report goes, we all cherish its sacred history, and still hope for a bright future for this village of less than 500 souls which, notwithstanding, holds the honor of being the first incorporated town in North Carolina.

Washington, the present county seat of Beaufort County, and a growing town of 6,211 persons by the census of 1910, has a history that dates back almost to the Indian troubles of 1711. It was in this year that a fort and garrison was placed on the estate of Mr. Lionel Reading, and was called Fort Reading. Though Fort Reading was on the south side of the river, it may properly be said to have been the beginning of Washington. Little mention of the place is made between the years 1715 and 1775. In 1726 a grant of land was made to Christopher Dudley conveying 337 acres of land, on a part of which Washington now stands, to Mr. Dudley. In 1727 Dudley transferred this tract to Edward Salter, who in turn conveyed it to John Worley. Worley deeded the land to Thomas Bonner in 1729, describing the tract as "the plantation whereon I now dwell." Thomas Bonner lived on this plantation, and at his death, Colonel James Bonner, of Revolutionary renown, came into possession of the estate. It was James Bonner who laid out the streets and lots of the town of Washington in 1776, selling the lots by lottery, and conveying the streets, to-

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<sup>20</sup>*C. R.*, II, 80.



gether with lots No. 21, on which was to be erected a courthouse, jail and pillory, and No. 50, which St. Peter's Church now occupies, to the public generally.<sup>21</sup> In the corner of the churchyard on Main Street may be seen the tomb of Colonel James Bonner, once the owner of all the land on which Washington is built, and the selector of the site of the town.

This town has the honor of being the first place named in honor of George Washington. From the journal of the Council of Safety of North Carolina, in session at Halifax, September 27, 1776, we quote as follows: "Resolved that Captain John Forster, commander of the armed brig, the 'General Washington,' now lying at Washington, do proceed with all possible dispatch to Ocracoke Bar, and to remain within the said bar in order to protect the trading vessels which may be coming into or going out of that port, until one of the aforesaid armed vessels [the 'King Tammany' and the 'Pennsylvania Farmer'] shall return there, or shall be otherwise ordered."<sup>22</sup> Thus we see that Washington was fast becoming a small town; that the harbor could accommodate small armed vessels, which were of greater draft than merchantmen, and that its name had been generally recognized as Washington by the year 1776, where our colonial observations cease as far as this paper is concerned. Washington's greatest growth, unlike Bath, was during the period following the Revolution and even after the Civil War, and therefore its richest history is not included in a colonial retrospection. The names of Blount, Bonner, Brown, Gladden, Telfair, Reading, Respass, Van Norden and others are connected with the pre-Revolutionary as well as the post-Revolutionary history of Washington, and these names have, for the most part, been commemorated by having streets of Washington named in their honor.

Chocowinity, a small town on the south side of the river, about three miles from Washington, was begun in colonial times. It was probably a small hamlet in 1745, for it is mentioned in the act for the division of Beaufort County for the better maintenance and construction of the public roads.<sup>23</sup> The name is a very musi-

<sup>21</sup>Rodman, *Washington and Its Early Inhabitants*. North Carolina Day Program, 1914.

<sup>22</sup>C. R., X, 877.

<sup>23</sup>S. R., XXIII, 222.



cal Indian name, the meaning of which I have been unable to find out. Chocowinity was on the frontier when the Indians surprised the white settlements on the morning of September 22, 1711. Tradition has it that the first house to be fired was the one owned by John Porter at Chocowinity.<sup>24</sup> Chocowinity has never attained to any size, being still a mere village. It had less chance to grow because of commercial reasons than did Bath, for it is situated a short distance from the head of Chocowinity Bay, an arm of Pamlico River. The town is best known on account of the fact that for a long time it was the location of a good secondary school established and maintained by the Episcopal Church.

Of these three colonial towns which we have discussed, Bath, Washington, and Chocowinity, Bath was the largest until after the Revolution. It was the center of social life, of commercial activity, and of civil government in the county. It had the best location, for "on either side of the bay the land, covered with a promiscuous growth of trees, slopes gently down to the water's edge, and this beautiful sheet of water is frequently, early in the day, as smooth as glass, upon the shining surface of which appears painted the trees, with the delicate, tender greens of spring-time or the deeper tints of summer, or, more beautiful still, the gorgeous reds, yellows, and greens of the autumn tide."<sup>25</sup> It had the start over both Washington and Chocowinity, and it is really difficult to see why Bath is not the city today and Washington merely a town. They all three remain, and other towns have sprung up in the county, but even if they can outstrip their older rivals commercially, they cannot deprive them of the heritage of a past history.

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## RELIGION AND CHURCHES IN THE COUNTY.

Despite the fact that the early settlers of Beaufort County had trouble enough in an economic and social way, they also had to contend with trouble from their religion, or, more correctly, in a majority of cases, because of their lack of religion. The men

<sup>24</sup>Grimes, *Notes on Colonial North Carolina*. "Booklet," v. 5.

<sup>25</sup>Peele, *Notes on Bath*. North Carolina Day Program, 1904.

who were the settlers in early Beaufort County were men like those to be found on the frontiers today—pioneers of civilization; men with small means, especially pecuniary means; men possessed of large hearts and a good will; courageous, restless, and independent, but, despite all this, not essentially religious persons, and generally careless in the observance of the outward forms of religion. They came and settled and would have governed themselves, had they been permitted to do so, in peace, but the burdens of the early colonists were greatly augmented by the advent of the proprietary governors and their acts to make the Church of England the established church in the colony.

Prior to the Vestry Act of 1701 the settlers in the present county of Beaufort had no ministers, not coming in great bodies as did the Puritans, or the Quakers, or the Huguenots, who settled farther south. They moved into the wildernesses, staked their claims, and began to clear away the trees, often without regard for the proximity of a neighbor. If the settler thrived, he was usually influenced and aided by his wife, who ordinarily was of a finer temperament religiously than her consort. They probably worshiped God in their own way, attributing to Him their blessings and their prosperity. If the Indians were a menace, if the crops were bad, if fever and pestilence thinned the numbers of the little settlement, then there is no telling to what a level the spiritual life of these pioneers may have ebbed. Certain we are that the great majority of them were not very religious, not having any pastor to put before them the duties and necessities of living a religious life. Religion was, however, a very important thing for a man to be without in 1665, when Yemans was governor of the settlements along the Cape Fear, for if he was not a professed believer in some religion or another, he was not recognized by the government, nor was he allowed to hold lands. Locke, in his Fundamental Constitution,<sup>26</sup> emphasized the necessity of professing some religion, though appearing to be liberal toward Dissenters. Section 96, however, of this Fundamental Constitution, reads in part: "As the country comes to be sufficiently planted, and distributed into fit divisions, it shall belong to the parliament to take

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<sup>26</sup>*C. R.*, I, 187-207.

care of the building of churches, and the public maintenance of divines, to be employed in the exercise of religion, *according to the Church of England.*"

I quote this passage purposely, and underscore the last phrase particularly, because it illustrates the spirit of the Proprietors. They were willing enough to have Dissenters settle here in order that they might bring wealth into their pockets, but they were ready to force them to support the Church of England after having made such highly-puffed claims of religious toleration. It is not to be supposed that the settlers of the Pamlico region were religious refugees, for this they were not. They were mostly people who came for economic reasons to search for better land, or more hospitable climate, or more favorable terms of settlement. Therefore, the very reasons which led the earlier settlers to the banks of the Pamlico River were against the early and rapid growth of religious ideas. Still those in power, either through personal interest or impelled by the outside power to which they were responsible, early took steps to establish the Anglican or Church of England as the recognized and only duly authorized church, as we shall now see.

In the vestry measures of 1701, the only parish named in what was then Bath County was the parish of Pampticough. This parish comprised the settlements along the banks of the Pamlico River, and was established in order to accommodate the people of Bath Town. This continued to be the parish of Pampticough for the space of about fifteen years. The ministers of the gospel who preached during these years were sent over either by the Church of England or by the Society for Propagating the Gospel, an organization in England for the purpose of evangelizing her colonies, both in the New World and elsewhere. The first of these ministers was one Daniel Brett, who arrived some time in 1701 or 1702. He was not a conscientious laborer, and his character was odious, judging from contemporary estimates made of him. He was a member of the Church party, of course, and his character brought only contempt for the Church and religion in general. But the Church party never ceased to labor for the establishment and firm entrenchment of the Established Church in the growing



colony. In 1704 the authorities advanced a step, and, under Governor Daniel, they passed a law that deprived every person of the power to hold office of trust, honor, or profit who was not a communicant in the Anglican Church.

In the years between 1704 and 1711 three men were sent to preach to the colonists. I mention all these, as I mentioned the first, because they all preached in Pampticough Precinct, which comprised a great part of Beaufort County of today. These men were Messrs. Blair, Gordon, and Adams. Mr. Blair baptized about a hundred children. He it was who tells us that there were four classes of persons within the colony, to wit: "First, the Quakers, who were the most powerful enemies to the Church Government, but a people very ignorant of what they profess. The second sort are a great many who have no religion, but would be Quakers if by that they were not obliged to lead a more moral life than they are willing to comply to. A third sort are something like Presbyterians, which sort is upheld by some idle fellows who have left their lawful employment and preach and baptize throughout the country without any manner of order from any sect or pretended church. A fourth sort, which is really zealous for the interests of the church, are fewer in number, but the better sort of people, and would do very much for the settlement of the Church Government there, if not opposed to these precedent sects."<sup>27</sup>

These three men, namely, Messrs. Blair, Gordon, and Adams, were much better ministers than Brett or than Urmstone, who followed Adams. Urmstone, though not sent out by the Society for Propagating the Gospel, was, like so many Englishmen both before him and after him, merely a rector in order to make a living; in other words he was preaching merely for the living there was in it.<sup>28</sup> He was, as Dr. Hawks says, unamiable in disposition and covetous also. He was, judging from the letters written to the Secretary of the S. P. G., one of the most chronic complainers that ever struck these colonies. And yet he remained here, drew his salary, was waited on by his own slaves, and ate the best his parishoners could give him for sixteen years!

It was during Urmstone's stay here as missionary that Pampti-

<sup>27</sup>*History of the Baptists in North Carolina*, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup>This is Dr. Hawks' opinion of him. *History of North Carolina*, v. 1.



cough Parish was made into St. Thomas Parish, Hyde Parish, and Craven Parish. This was done by an act<sup>29</sup> passed by the General Assembly bearing the date 1715, which reads in part as follows: "It is hereby enacted that this province of North Carolina be divided into parishes according to the Divisions and precincts hereinafter mentioned, that is to say \* \* \* Perquimans, Currituck and Hyde, to be parishes & bounded by the limits of the several precincts: the Remaining part of Pamlico river, and the branches thereof, commonly called Beaufort precinct, to be one parish by the name of St. Thomas parish." Here we see the name first lawfully recognized, by which the same parish is known today. Vestrymen were appointed for the various parishes. Those named for St. Thomas parish being

The Honorable Chas. Eden, Esq.,	Capt. Jno. Drinkwater,
Tobias Knight, Esq.,	Capt. Jno. Clark,
Col. Christopher Gale,	Mr. John Adams,
Mr. John Porter,	Mr. Patrick Maule,
Daniel Richardson, Esq.,	Mr. Thos. Harding,
Mr. Thomas Worsley,	Mr. Jno. Lillington.

Bath was the common meeting place for the religious gatherings in the parish. It was the only town in the parish, and it was easily accessible by water for all those who had any desire to attend. No church was as yet built, though provision had been made in the act incorporating Bath Town for a suitable lot on which to build a church. Some twenty years later, however, a church was finished, externally at least, for, in 1734, the present old St. Thomas Church, of which Bath is so proud, was completed. It was built of small, well-made brick brought from England, and the floor was likewise made of tiles. The same floor remains today. It was arranged inside as most of the churches in that day were arranged—two rows of pews with the aisles leading down each side and the middle of the church. It is very neatly furnished now, and with its old inscriptions of the faithful few whose bones lie buried under the chancel, it is one of the curiosities of the quaint old town of Bath.

The Act of 1701, and the select vestries appointed by it, though

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<sup>29</sup>S. R., XXIII, 6.

it did not materially concern the scattered settlers along the Pamlico, continued in effect until the act of March 12, 1710-11, which appointed new vestries in all the parishes. The Act of 1711 was not radically different from the Act of 1701, though it was fully as intolerant toward the Quakers and the few Baptists then found here. The Act of 1715 supplanted the Act of 1711, and continued in effect until it was repealed by the vestry act of 1741. This act<sup>30</sup> was the most extensive act yet passed in reference to the Church. It gave the Church almost as much power over the people as the Colonial Government had. It gave the Church the power to levy poll taxes as large as it saw fit; it gave the wardens and vestry complete control over all church moneys; and it also gave these men the power to assess or levy any taxes they deemed necessary "for building a church, chappel, or chappels; to purchase lands for a Glebe, to erect convenient buildings thereon, and to keep the aforesaid Edifices in repair."<sup>31</sup> The wardens and vestry could also have taxed the people for the purchase of books, ornaments for the church or necessities of public worship, and have been justified by this law in so doing.

The people of Beaufort County must have been of a different type, generally speaking, from the majority of people who settled other Eastern North Carolina counties. We do know they did not come to escape religious persecution; we know further that they were of English origin, and that the majority of them must have been warmly attached to the principles of the Church of England. We make these statements because we are able to find no registered complaints from the people of Beaufort against the excessive taxes for the support of the Church. Their general interest in matters of religion is further attested to by the fact that the people of St. Thomas parish in Beaufort County were the only people who ever owned their three hundred acres of glebe land, or a glebe house. These were acquired in the ministry of Rev. Mr. Garzia, who became the minister of St. Thomas parish about 1735. He was a zealot, and was well beloved by the people. He died November 29, 1744, as a result of a fall from his horse while he was returning from visiting a sick parishioner.

<sup>30</sup>*S. R.*, XXIII, 187-191.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*

The next really great man who was connected with St. Thomas Church in the capacity of its minister was the Reverend Alexander Stewart, who came from England in 1753 as the special agent of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, as well as being the minister of St. Thomas Church. Until the spring of 1771, nearly as far as we are concerned, he worked faithfully among the people of Beaufort, Hyde, and Pitt counties, serving thirteen chapels besides his parish church.<sup>32</sup> He helped in the education of the youth of Beaufort County, and he often supplied school children with necessary books. The church at Bath received its finishing touches in 1762, not having been quite completed in 1734. He suffered much on account of sickness during the later part of his life, though he was never the complainer that many of his predecessors sent out by the S. P. G. were. His letters to the Society were sane, sincere, and accurate. He influenced two men to become candidates for Holy Orders. These were Mr. Peter Blinn and Mr. Nathaniel Blount, who both rendered a good service to the people a little later.

For a very few more years after Mr. Stewart's death the Established Church continued to be supported by all the tithables, whether church members or not. Mr. Stewart gave in 1767 the number of taxable persons in St. Thomas parish as 110.<sup>33</sup> Thus we see that the numbers in St. Thomas parish had grown immensely from the time when, in 1711, there were about a dozen houses in the town of Bath. And yet, the church as an establishment of the State ceased to exist forever upon the outbreak of the War of the Revolution. In many places the church was a menace to great numbers, but in Beaufort County the church was a blessing.

There were probably a few persons in the county who were Quakers. These people were to be found pretty generally through the eastern part of the State. There were also a few Baptists in all probability, for the Baptists, at a later date, were unusually active immediately to the north and west of us. But, as a whole, we may say that the colonial inhabitants of Beaufort County were staunch adherents to the principles advocated and taught them by the Established Church.

<sup>32</sup>De Rossett, *Church History of North Carolina*, p. 73.

<sup>33</sup>C. R., VII, 145.



## COMMERCE IN THE COUNTY.

It would seem that when a colony is planted in a foreign and uncultivated country, that commerce and intercourse with the mother country and other foreign countries would be extensive and prosperous. But such is not always the case even today; and in the latter quarter of the seventeenth century, when the first settlements were made along Pamlico and Albemarle sounds, it was even less true than it is now. When many of the settlers landed in the forests of Carolina their relations with the mother country and the outside world practically ceased. They always came well supplied with tools and implements and household utensils, and, owing to the abundance of the game afforded by the forests and rivers, together with the results of their thrifty husbandry, it was very easy to get along without too much dependence being placed upon the products of the mother country. Of course, even in the earliest days, powder and arms and new tools and some other articles of absolute necessity to life, such as salt and medicines, had to be imported.

Owing to the fact that some of the settlers of our part of the State came both from Virginia and the New England colonies, the earliest commercial relations established were between the new settlers of the Albemarle and Bath counties and the two sections mentioned above. Most of the necessary articles were got through the Virginia merchants, or through the New England traders. These merchants bartered their wares in exchange for the products of the colonists, money being almost unknown. The price of any article was stated to be so and so many pounds of tobacco, or indigo, or so and so many bushels of corn or wheat. The salt meat of the colony, both beef and pork, was very excellent, and this was largely exported, through the agency of the thrifty New England shipmen, to the West India Islands, where it was exchanged for sugar, cocoa, and molasses.

In 1707, Robert Holden, who had been Collector of Customs in Albemarle as far back as 1679, writing to the Lords Proprietors about North Carolina, says: "It has barred Inlets into It; which spoyles the trade of it and none but small vessels from New Eng-



land and Bermudas trades there. The soil is more lusty than South Carolina. It produceth Tobacco; Indian Corne; English Wheat in abundance; Beef, Pork, hides, Tarr, and so consequently pitch, and furs as Beaver: Otter: Fox and Wild Cat skins, deare skins; Tanned Lether, Tallow," etc.<sup>34</sup> This list is protracted still further, but this is enough to give us a general idea of the articles in which our commerce consisted, even as early as the first decade of the eighteenth century. Thus we see that despite the fact that the colonists *could* get along with but little outside aid, they, notwithstanding, very soon began to export their products to outside markets.

Beaufort County was not behind the other counties in beginning commercial relations with other colonies and other countries. Bath was incorporated in 1705, because it was then one of the most flourishing towns in the State, and its growth was due to its commerce, which in turn was traceable to the comparatively good harbor of the town. An early chronicler<sup>35</sup> describes Bath as being "not the unpleasantest part of the country,—nay in all probability it will become the centre of trade, as having the advantages of a better inlet for shipping and surrounded with most pleasant savannas, very useful for stocks of cattle. In this, as in all other parts of the province, there is no money; everyone buys and pays with their commodities, the difference of their money being as one to three." <sup>36</sup> The harbor of Bath is not very deep, but considering the fact that the vessels of those times did not draw much water, it was sufficiently good for Bath to be a thriving town as the result of its commerce, especially between the years 1755-1775. We know that no great amount of commerce was shipped from or received at Bath prior to 1715, for in this year the town was made a port of entry, and that a collector of customs was not appointed for the town until a few years afterward.

Lawson, in his geographical history of North Carolina, writing about 1709 (he was cruelly put to death by the Indians in 1711), says, having just remarked upon the great plenty in the province: "Thus our merchants are not many, nor have those few there be

<sup>34</sup>*C. R.*, II, xiv.

<sup>35</sup>William Gordon, ex-missionary to Carolina.

<sup>36</sup>*C. R.*, I, 715.

applied themselves to the European trade. The planter sits contentedly at home, whilst his oxen thrive and grow fat, and his stocks daily increase: the fatted porkets and poultry are easily raised to his table, and his orchard affords him liquor, so that he eats and drinks away the cares of the world, and desires no greater happiness than that which he daily enjoys. Whereas, not only the European, but also the Indian trade, might be carried on to a great profit, because we lie as fairly for the body of Indians as any settlement in English America; and for the small trade that has been carried on in that way, the dealers therein have thrived as fast as any men, and the soonest raised themselves of any people I have known in Carolina.”<sup>37</sup> Not a bad estimate of the possibilities of intra-colonial trade, though not so favorable an estimate of early colonial plantation life! For various reasons, some of which being the poorness of harbors, the shoals, the dangers to commerce from pirates, the bad proprietary government, and the general plenty that prevailed, early commerce was a rather neglected enterprise.

Lawson also says: “Our produce for exportation to Europe and the islands in America are beef, pork, tallow, hides, deer skins, furs, pitch, tar, wheat, Indian corn, peas, masts, staves, heading, boards and all sorts of timber and lumber for Madera and the West Indies, rosin, turpentine and several sorts of gums and tars, with some medicinal drugs, are here produced; besides rice and several other foreign grains, which thrive well.” Most of these articles mentioned by Lawson continued to be exported, for in 1765, in the Memorial of the Merchants, Traders and Planters, we find mentioned pitch, tar, turpentine, masts, yards and bowsprits, which the colonists prayed to be allowed to ship to Ireland, Spain and Portugal, and to the Streights. The petition further says that “Beef, pork, rice, indigo, naval stores, corn, lumber and hides could be sold to advantage outside Britain.”<sup>38</sup>

As the county increased in population and wealth, several of the merchants and larger planters of the county built ships and found that commerce between Bath and other Eastern Carolina ports was profitable, for the tax of one pound of powder and four

<sup>37</sup>Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, pp. 146, 147.

<sup>38</sup>*C. R.*, V, 322.

pounds of swan shot for "every three tons measure" of the vessel by the Statute of 1715 (Chapter XXXV),<sup>39</sup> and of one quarter pound of powder and one pound of shot or lead for each ton, according to the Statute of 1754 (Chapter VI),<sup>40</sup> was not levied on vessels owned or built by any resident person of the colony. The favor granted to home-built and home-owned ships was evidently granted in order to aid the building up of a more prosperous foreign trade. These laws and acts had a wholesome effect, for they, together with the excellent facilities which the forests and the waterways of our section of the State then and now offer to shipbuilding, caused the colonists of Beaufort and other counties to have a pretty fair sized colonial merchant marine at the time of the outbreak of the Revolution. This is proved by the attention paid to the importance of not shipping any necessities out of the province, either in home or foreign bottoms, during the Revolution.

The colonial commerce of Beaufort County, then, considering the fact that it is situated on a broad, navigable river, and that it contains the town of Bath, one of the earliest ports of entry, was, despite the fact that all commerce in the colony was very small until about the middle of the eighteenth century, a rather important industry in the county. It was the sole means of the people's exchanging their products for money. It was the way in which the people kept in touch with the outside world. It was the method used to obtain the few luxuries of life that were used in the county in pre-Revolutionary times. Altogether, it was an important influence in the life of colonial Beaufort County; it was one of the greatest influences for good in the county, and it was the means of making the fortunes and names of several families whose descendants now live among us.

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<sup>39</sup>S. R., XXIII, 45-46.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 401.

## PIRACY IN THE COUNTY.

In any discussion of Colonial Beaufort County, when we have touched upon the commerce and trade of pre-Revolutionary times, we cannot pass the subject of piracy silently by. The commerce of the colony, together with the geographical features of the eastern part of North Carolina, and our nearness to the Bermudas and the West Indies as a whole, made the ports on the sounds and on the Cape Fear, Neuse, and Pamlico rivers, particularly, very inviting to that nest of pirates which infested the West India Islands during the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries.

When we speak of pirates and piracy in this modern age it is as if we were transported into a second age of semi-barbarous lawlessness and adventure, so marvelous and far off does this sea highway robbery seem. But, nevertheless, about the time the early settlers around Bath and other places along the Pamlico were struggling to found their homes, there was a government of pirates among the coral islands off the southeast coast of the United States which had already reached its "golden age," and which was about to be disbanded. The breaking up of this "government" was due to both troubles among themselves and trouble as a result of the effective energy of the King's fleets. With Henry Morgan, Captain Kidd, Hornigold, or Vane, real kings of desperadoes, we will not concern ourselves, for these never made any depredations on the sounds of the Eastern Carolina coast of which we have record, but Edward Teach, or "Black Beard," as he is commonly known in the legends which we still hear concerning his bold and lawless deeds in and near Bath, and Major Steed Bonnett are of particular interest to us who are lovers of colonial history.

Edward Thack or Thatch or Teach, as his surname is variously spelled, was a disciple of the noted Hornigold, and though he made his headquarters at New Providence in the Bahamas, during the earlier part of his career, he it was who a little later so completely held the people of Bath and the surrounding settlements along the banks of the Pamlico at his mercy. He made his



headquarters in the latter part of his career almost entirely on the waters of Pamlico and Albemarle sounds.

Teach was composed of the stuff necessary to make a successful pirate. He was a large, dark man physically; his will was as strong as his physique. He was passionate to the extreme; he caroused and ate and drank as hard and as heartily as the famous robber barons of mediæval Europe. He was fond of luxuries, and despite his fierce mien, due to a superabundance of long black whiskers, from which he derived his nickname, Black Beard, he was amiable to women generally.<sup>41</sup> In keeping with his nature, he had some eight or more wives, a state of matrimony only equaled in modern times by wealthy Mohammedans and by exceptional cases among the Mormons. Teach's unlawful method of gaining a living was thus in perfect accord with his general temperament.

The depredations of the pirates of the Bahamas became such frequent and serious affairs that it was necessary for something to be done to suppress their general lawlessness. The commerce of the Bath, Albemarle, Archdale, and Clarendon counties with Virginia and with the New England colonies was a growing one. The cargoes which these colonial merchantmen carried were often very valuable, and were consequently the coveted objects of many a piratical eye, since not only French and Spanish ships were molested, but also the merchantmen of the colonies or the mother country itself. So troublesome had these pirates made themselves, and so risky had commerce become, that it became necessary for the King to issue a general pardon to all those who had been engaged in piratical depredations, and who would, within one year, surrender themselves and take an oath not to engage in this unlawful enterprise again. Many of these pirates acceded to the terms of the pardon, gave up this illegal method of living, and became planters and good citizens in several of the colonies.<sup>42</sup>

Teach also pretended to agree to the generous terms of the proclamation of Charles II., and he accordingly settled at Bath. His resolutions (if he ever made any) were soon broken; the thrilling sensations of a chase, a few broadsides, a hand-to-hand

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<sup>41</sup>Ashe, *Our Own Pirates*. "Booklet," v. 2.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

struggle,—and then the grim satisfaction of having his unfortunate enemies walk the plank proved too much for his wild and bloody nature. In November of the same year he set sail from Bath and began all his freebooting anew. He sailed the seas, armed both ship and crew, and his name became a terror to every mariner. His ship was of the kind which had clean heels, and he could chase, strike, plunder, and sink or burn a ship and slip away again before he could be taken. The commerce of the Carolina colonies almost ceased to exist, and Charles, in desperation, sent some of the most skillful English officers to put an end to a part of the buccaneering of the Bermuda outlaws. These loyal seamen of Charles II. succeeded in capturing some of the robbers, but not Teach nor Major Bonnett, who had become Black Beard's running mate, since these two bold buccaneers were off on a cruise at the time their headquarters were taken.

Exulting in his having escaped, and conscious of his own strength and the fleetness of his ships, Teach, together with Bonnett, sailed the seas, becoming more of a terror than ever. He established anew the old order of the buccaneers, and, because of his bravery and daring, he became their leader. The commerce of our colony, though it was necessarily small, was paralyzed, and the trade of South Carolina with other colonies or with the mother country was also broken up. The King sent Sir Woods Rogers to drive these pirates off the seas. He captured all of those he found at Providence with the exception of Vane, Bonnett, and Black Beard, who were away on a cruise, and thus escaped capture. But luck was not always with Teach, for, upon repairing to the coast of North Carolina, two of his ships, his flagship and another sloop, were wrecked at Topsail Inlet in June, 1717.

As a result of this misfortune some of his crew deserted him, going to the middle colonies, settling, and becoming good citizens. This gave Teach another opportunity to take advantage of a second pardon, which he was to have received from the King upon his surrendering at Bath. Teach, however, was only pretending to reform, for he again took to piracy after a short rest. On his outward voyage he captured two French merchantmen loaded with the products of semi-tropical countries, part of which con-

sisted of chocolate, sweetmeats, loaf sugar, and other commodities.<sup>43</sup> These ships he took, and on the night of the 13th or 14th<sup>44</sup> of September he entered Ocracoke Inlet and proceeded to place his booty in as safe a place as possible, leaving a part of it at the plantation of Tobias Knight at Bath. Whether these goods were known by Knight or Governor Eden to have been taken through piracy or not is not certain,<sup>45</sup> though the people evidently suspected Teach. He had robbed a perianger of William Bell, a merchant of Pasquotank, in the Pamlico River on the night of the 14th of September, and had taken over seventy-five pounds in money and goods.

It is the common people—the populace at large—who suffer most when any outrage is committed, and it is they who finally rise up in their might and either personally or through their agents make their own restitution. The people sent a complaint to the Governor of Virginia, Spotswood, and a petition for aid sufficient to rid the colony of this pest of a pirate. Spotswood acted with great secrecy, and, securing two officers, Lieutenant Maynard and Captain Brand, from His Majesty's ships the "Lyme" and the "Pearl," which were then lying in Chesapeake Bay, he gave them command over two well-armed and equipped sloops of war. They sailed for Ocracoke on the 17th of November, coming into Ocracoke Inlet on the evening of the 21st. They found Black Beard on the inside of the bar, and, anchoring, they prepared to pass the night, having the treacherous Teach bottled up in Pamlico Sound.<sup>46</sup>

The next morning found both Maynard and Teach ready for a deadly combat. The ships maneuvered, each trying to obtain the advantage of the other, and here it seems as if the pirates held the advantage, for they were familiar with the bars and shoals, whereas the attacking vessels had to feel their way, so to speak. Soon one of Maynard's ships grounded, and a broadside from Teach killed or wounded some twenty of his crew. But the brave lieutenant had come there either to take Teach or to be killed in the attempt; he did the former. After a series of maneuvers,

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<sup>43</sup>*C. R.*, II, 342.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 341-349.

<sup>46</sup>Ashe, *Our Own Pirates*. "Booklet," v. 2.



and a hand-to-hand struggle, the pirates were taken, only after Black Beard had fallen, faint and mortally wounded. There is one story that says Teach's head was cut off and was affixed to the bowsprit of Maynard's ship as she sailed into Bath Creek. Certain it is, however, that the pirates were taken; that their plunder was carried to Virginia and sold at auction by the government upon the recommendation and testimony of Captain Brand, the confiscated goods bringing the large sum of 2,238 pounds; and that the commerce of the colonies again began to flow along at its normal pulse.<sup>47</sup>

In the narrative of the story of the capture of Teach, Maynard is probably due most of the credit. His vessel remained clear, unlike that of Brand, which grounded. It is well to note that Maynard was responsible to Captain Brand, who was commander-in-chief of the two sloops.<sup>48</sup> It is also to be noted that Major Steed Bonnett was not at hand when Teach was taken, but that he continued his life of a sea-marauder until he was finally captured and hanged in Charleston by Colonel William Rhett. Thus passed two pirates whose daring and bloodiness and whose intimate knowledge of and interest in our county form remarkable contrasts to our knowledge of present-day life on and around Pamlico and Albemarle sounds.

These pirates were products of their times, just as we today are products of the times in which we live. They often began with good intentions, and lived within the law, for they usually had permits to prey upon the commerce of France and Spain, who were in those times almost continually at war with England. But when French or Spanish merchantmen were scarce, it was too great a temptation to many of these buccaneers to allow a richly laden vessel flying the English flag to pass unmolested. When they had once broken the law it was the next and only logical step to become a pirate, as a great many of these commissioned privateers did.

Piracy, even, was not regarded as such a dreadful crime except by the unfortunate shipowners or ship crews who suffered as a result of their depredations. Pirates often received favor from

<sup>47</sup>*C. R.*, II, 334.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 322.



high officials in the Colonial Government; respect was almost universally accorded them. It appeared after the capture of Teach that both Governor Charles Eden and Tobias Knight, the secretary of the Council, must have been aware of the real nature of the life and business of this pirate.<sup>49</sup> Knight was caused to appear before the Governor and his council, and, though he did apparently clear himself, he was never secretary again, dying a month or so afterwards.

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### SOCIAL LIFE IN THE COUNTY.

Early social life in Beaufort County, as well as in all other counties of the colony, was hardly worthy of the name. The people were kind, and meant well, but owing to the very nature of early life in the vast wildernesses of the eastern part of the State, there was little time to be spent in merriment or diversion. There was always danger from the Indians; there was almost incessant toil for both the masters and their slaves in the clearing of the plantations, in the case of the wealthy planter, or of the small field in the case of the less opulent settlers; there was also such a sparseness of settlement that intercourse between a man and his nearest neighbors might take up the best part of a week.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century there came over what was then Bath County a change in social conditions. The county was becoming more thickly settled, and the hastily constructed huts of the first settlers began to be replaced by the forerunners, at least, of that type of southern home which is easily distinguished as the colonial mansion. Some few of these houses were constructed of brick, but the great majority of them were frame buildings, not particularly handsome structures, but commodious and possessing an aspect of quiet and dignified honesty. The life in this early colonial period was, as I have said, strictly rural, each plantation or farm being of necessity its own social center, unit, and life. Right here we are able to account for the origin of what is so widely known as "true Southern hospitality." People, secluded as they were, were always glad when visi-

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<sup>49</sup>*C. R.*, II, 341-349.

tors or travelers came their way, for human nature likes and will have the companionship of other men's society whenever it is possible to obtain it. Thus the traveler, whether stranger or friend, was a bearer of news; he was one who could break the monotony of the seclusion of early colonial farm life. Hence it was that the latch-string always hung on the outside, and hence it is that the southern colonies generally were characterized by their hospitality.

Until a comparatively late date there was but one church in our present county of Beaufort, and this was the church of St. Thomas Parish at Bath. The parish had been established long before the church was built in 1734, and the ministers were sent from England. But, aside from this, the religious life of Bath County was, like the farm life, isolated and necessarily self-contained and sustained on each farm. The head of the family always instructed his sons and his slaves in some of the fundamental principles of ethics and religion, and in the case of the wealthier planters, where there was some one who could read, passages from Holy Writ were read to the family and the assembled dependent servants, sometimes at the close of each day, but usually at least once a week. Some misguided historians, in particular one George Chalmers, a British historian, and those who have been misled as a result of following this uninformed writer, have said that the colonists "derived no benefit from the coercion of laws, or the influences of religion."<sup>50</sup>

Now, it has been proved beyond a doubt that these early settlers of Beaufort County were, as were all the other early colonial settlers, ardent believers in individual liberty and untrammelled religious freedom, but it is too condemnatory to say that the whole colony was essentially bad simply because they failed to support the ministers as they were expected, or to pay their tithes when money was the scarcest thing in the county. It would have been too unnatural, too radical a thing to happen for the colonists, who, either directly or somewhat indirectly (through the other colonies), came from England, to have so quickly departed from the observance of the rules of the Anglican Church, espe-

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<sup>50</sup>Chalmers, *Political Annals of the Present United Colonies*, p. 166.

cially so when they did not come to North Carolina for religious but for economic reasons.<sup>51</sup> Hence, though churches were few and the parishioners at times disobedient, we may safely conclude that the Spirit among the early Beaufort County people was cherished and respected along with the Mind and the Body.

There were very few times when the people gathered together in comparatively large groups. They came to the courts and to the assemblies. They very seldom left their homes long at a time, for, if they did so, they might expect to return and find them plundered, robbed, or burned by the Indians. But on some occasions neighbors would come together to "log-rollings," by which was designated the process of cutting the primeval forests and clearing the land for tilling. Whole forests of the most beautiful long-leaf pine timber were cut and destroyed in this manner. Millions upon millions of feet of unmatched pine lumber have been cut, rolled together by slaves and burnt, merely to get clear of it. How wasteful were our great-grandfathers, and yet they knew it not! On these occasions of neighborly aid there was a great deal of merriment, the brandy jug always being freely passed. Notwithstanding this, these log-rollings were a great factor in a social life that was otherwise very monotonous, if it was not positively dreary.

After the suppression, in 1713, of the Indian uprising of 1711, the county became more thickly settled than ever. The one great barrier to the peace and freedom of the settlers was removed when the power of the Indian tribes was broken, and the colony flourished between the years 1717 and 1735; the population of the North Carolina Colony increased from about 9,000 to about 50,000, for there were, according to McCulloh, about 40,000 *whites* then in the county.<sup>52</sup> In 1732, according to the estimate of Governor Burrington, the whites were "full 30,000 and the negroes about 6,000." If we are to believe Mr. McCulloh's statement concerning the number of whites, and follow the same ratio of whites to blacks as given by Burrington, then the population of 1735 was, as I have said, about 50,000 souls, especially since

<sup>51</sup>Raper, *Social Life in Colonial North Carolina*. "Booklet," v. 3.

<sup>52</sup>*C. R.*, II, xvii.



the weight of authority seems to be against the historians who place the number at a smaller figure.

The beginning of the days of peace, plenty, and prosperity marked the establishment of some of the oldest and most renowned families in Beaufort County. The Readings, the Blounts, the Bonners, the Ormonds, the Roulhacs, the Respesses, the Browns, the Barrows, the Pattons and numerous other families whose names are familiar all over the county, came and settled immediately after the Indian war of 1711, if they did not already live there. The greater part of these men were of the upper class, possessed of fine plantations and numbers of slaves, and the life they led was a gay one, despite the distance that often separated their estates. Balls were often given at these early colonial homes, where, according to tradition, "gay ladies in rich brocades trod the stately minuets with their gailant partners." The stately halls were resonant with music and the voices of the merry dancers, and the hospitable tables of the host were always laden with the choicest foods then to be had. The houses were furnished very richly; tapestry, plate, brocaded mahogany furniture and fine linen were very often imported from England. Altogether the social life in Colonial Beaufort County from 1725 to 1775 was gay and brilliant, this being true especially of the upper classes.

To summarize, then, we may say that the early colonial life of Beaufort County was a rather hard one; that for a time the most of the settlers were not planters on a large scale; that the dangers from the Indians, the troubles arising between the incompetent proprietary governors, and the pestilence of the swamps kept any great number of settlers from coming for thirty or forty years after the earliest settlements were made. We have also seen how the population, and hence the depth and expanse of social life increased after the Indian troubles were over, and after the county and colony passed from under proprietary rule to the royal government of the King. We have also seen that with the growth of the county, and Bath in particular, that social life assumed a gayer aspect among the wealthier class, and a more enjoyable and satisfying aspect as far as all the people were concerned. The outbreak of the Revolution, then, found the people of Beaufort



County a part of a rural colony, well content but ambitious, law-abiding but thoroughly infused with the ideas of liberty and independence, and, as a whole, as happy, as generous, as faithful, and as nearly independent as any section of any other of the original thirteen colonies.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON BEAUFORT COUNTY PERSONAGES.

Thomas Carey, 1678-1722, an owner of land in Bath Town, held several offices of public honor, profit, and trust in the colony, and was later one of the chief figures in the Carey Rebellion, as has been called the grand row that was stirred up over the governorship of North Carolina. He held offices in both North and South Carolina, being *ex officio* governor of this province from 1704 to 1710.

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The only Colonial Governor who ever owned land and resided at Bath for any length of time was Charles Eden. He was Governor from 1712 until 1722, when he died. He lived at Salmon Creek in Bertie County, near Edenton, at the time of his death. He was too gentle a man to successfully cope with the times in which he lived, but under his rule the Indians were subdued, and the colony prospered. Eden it was who was accused of being one of Teach's accomplices, but this accusation lacks proof. Probably there was only envy and malice back of the accusation.

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Christopher Gale was an Englishman who came to North Carolina in the last decade of the seventeenth century. He was a man of considerable learning, and was justice of the General Court in 1703. Later he was appointed a member of the provincial council or deputy to the Lords Proprietors. He was major of militia; commissioner to South Carolina in 1712; captured by the French in the same year; collector of customs, and attorney-general. In

1712 he became chief justice, holding this office until 1717. Again he was reinstated into the office in 1722, when he served two years. He was one of the original vestrymen of St. Thomas Parish, being appointed in 1715. He went to England in 1724, but soon returned, being made chief justice for the third time. In 1727 he was appointed one of the commissioners to run the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia. His wife was Mrs. Sara Harvey, widow of Governor Harvey. He died at Edenton, in Chowan, though he resided at Bath for the most of his life.

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Tobias Knight, secretary to the government of Carolina, vestryman in the original vestry of St. Thomas Parish, deputy to John Danson and Lord Craven, Lords Proprietors, lived at Bath. In Governor Eden's time he was suspected of being confederate with Edward Teach, the pirate. He was a collector of the customs, and was chief justice for a short time before his death.

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John Lawson, surveyor-general of North Carolina until his death in September, 1711, at the hands of the Indians, was a citizen and a landowner in Bath. He was our earliest historian, and was a good naturalist, in addition to being a good writer and surveyor. The debt that North Carolina owes to this consistent chronicler who wrote *Lawson's History of North Carolina*, as it is generally known today, is no small one.

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Dr. Patrick Maule was another of the first vestrymen of St. Thomas Church. "Mr. Maule, my Deputy, is a man of learning, and has a plentiful fortune," says Edmond Porter, Esquire, judge of the admiralty court.<sup>53</sup> He had been deputy surveyor, and was one of the trustees appointed for the Bath Library in 1715. He was also justice of the peace for Beaufort precinct, and lived at Maule's Point, below Bath, which still holds his name. He married Mary, daughter of John Porter, senior.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>C. R., III, 514.

<sup>54</sup>See elsewhere in these notes.

Edward Moseley was one of the purchasers of land in the Town of Bath. Moseley's name stands out clear in the annals of early North Carolina, though he is not very intimately concerned with the history of Bath and Beaufort County. He was a member of the council in 1705; Virginia boundary line commissioner both in 1710 and in 1728; public treasurer in 1715; surveyor-general in 1723; South Carolina boundary line commissioner in 1737; commissioner to revise laws in 1740; chief baron of the exchequer in 1743; commissioned to run Granville's line in 1746, and was speaker of the Assembly at various times after 1715.<sup>55</sup>

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John Porter was one of the four men in whom was invested the oversight of the town of Bath after its reincorporation in 1715. He was speaker of the Assembly in 1697; he was a member of the general court, attorney-general, and a member of the council at later dates. He always espoused the cause of the people in their fight against tyranny for their chartered rights, taking the popular side in the Carey Rebellion.

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Robert Palmer was a member of the assembly, of the council, and was a surveyor general of His Majesty's late in the colonial period. Palmer lived at Bath, and was a consistent member of St. Thomas Church, wherein the body of his wife lies buried.

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John Worley, a vestryman of Chowan Parish, a member of the council, and a justice of the general court, lived on the tract of land on which Washington stands between the years 1727 and 1729.

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<sup>55</sup>Grimes, *Some Short North Carolina Biographies*. North Carolina Day Program, 1904.

## MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

According to the law of 1741, Beaufort County was entitled to two seats in the general assembly, and Bath Town, by virtue of the Bath Town Act, was entitled to one member. The assemblies usually met once every two years, except in the case of called meetings, at different towns within the colony, Bath, Newbern, Wilmington, and Halifax being the towns most frequently honored with meetings. The assembly passed such laws as were necessary to the welfare of the colony which were not embraced in the royal statutes of Great Britain. It provided for the safety and welfare of the province, and in short, it performed functions very similar to the functions performed by a session of the general assembly today. When a member was duly chosen to represent his town or county, there was nothing to keep him from representing the people for the rest of his life, provided he looked out for the welfare of his people, made a good public servant, and deported himself in a proper fashion in the assembly.

A list of the members of the general assembly from Beaufort County and Bath Town from 1731, the year in which Beaufort County was regarded as a separate county, up to and including the year 1775, the year of the outbreak of the Revolution, follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>From Beaufort County</i>	<i>From Bath Town</i>
1731	Edward Salter, Simon Alderson.....	Roger Kenyon
1733	Maj. Robert Turner, Dr. Patrick Maule.....	John Lahey
1734	Edward Salter, Maj. Robert Turner.....	Roger Kenyon
1735	Maj. Robert Turner, Dr. Patrick Maule.....	Roger Kenyon
1740	Simon Alderson, Benjamin Peyton.....	Roger Kenyon
1742	Simon Alderson, Benjamin Peyton.....	Robert Turner
1744	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton.....	Michael Coutanch
1746	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton.....	Wyriot Ormond
1747	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton.....	Michael Coutanch
1749	John Barrow, Wyriot Ormond.....	Michael Coutanch
1753	John Barrow, Wyriot Ormond.....	Michael Coutanch
1754	John Hardy, William Spier.....	Michael Coutanch
1755	John Hardy, William Spier.....	Michael Coutanch
1758	John Hardy, William Spier.....	Michael Coutanch
1760	John Barrow, John Simpson.....	Michael Coutanch
1761	John Barrow, Thomas Respass.....	Michael Coutanch
1762	John Barrow, Thomas Respass.....	Robert Palmer
1762	John Barrow, James Ellison.....	Wyriot Ormond
1764	John Barrow, Thomas Bonner.....	Wyriot Ormond
1766	John Barrow, Thomas Respass.....	Patrick Gordon



<i>Year</i>	<i>From Beaufort County</i>	<i>From Bath Town</i>
1767	John Barrow, Thomas Respass.....	Peter Blinn
1769	James Bonner, Moses Hare.....	Wyriot Ormond
1771	Thomas Bonner, Moses Hare.....	John Maule
1773	Thomas Respass, Roger Ormond.....	Wyriot Ormond
1773	Thomas Respass, Roger Ormond (Special sess.)	Wyriot Ormond
1774	Thomas Respass, Roger Ormond.....	William Brown
1775	Thomas Respass, Jr., Roger Ormond.....	William Brown

Beaufort County was well represented at each of the provincial congresses which met to provide for the safety and welfare of the state. In the provincial congress which met at Newbern, August 25, 1774, Roger Ormond and Thomas Respass represented Beaufort County, and William Brown sat for Bath.

In the second provincial congress which met at Newbern, April 3, 1775, were present Roger Ormond and Thomas Respass, Jr., representing Beaufort County, and William Brown represented Bath.

At the third provincial congress which assembled in Hillsboro August 25, 1775, Roger Ormond, Thomas Respass, Jr., John Patten, and John Cooper represented Beaufort County at large, and William Brown Bath.

At the fourth congress, met at Halifax, April 4, 1776, Roger Ormond, Thomas Respass, Jr., and John Cooper represented the county, and William Brown again represented Bath.

At the last provincial congress which met at Halifax on November 20, 1776, Messrs. John Barrow, Thomas Respass, Jr., Francis Jones, and Robert Tripp sat for Beaufort County, and William Brown for Bath Town.

The third provincial congress, meeting at Hillsboro, appointed as officers in the Continental Regiment of Beaufort County James Bonner, Colonel; Thomas Bonner, Lieutenant-Colonel; Roger Ormond, 1st Major, and William Brown, 2d Major.



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1835-1860

DURHAM, N. C.  
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PARTY POLITICS IN NORTH CAROLINA  
1835-1860

*By* J. G. DE ROULHAC HAMILTON



## FOREWORD

The following studies in North Carolina political history appeared in the Sunday issues of the *Charlotte Observer* from March 21 to August 22, 1915. In response to a considerable number of requests that they be preserved in a more permanent form they are now, through the kind permission of the editor of the *Observer*, here reprinted, substantially in the form in which they were first published.

In presenting these sketches of one phase of North Carolina history during one of the most important periods of the State's existence I wish to make it clear that the work is in no sense exhaustive. There are undoubtedly many sources of information to which I have not at this time access which would throw additional light on the motives and spirit of the various characters that appear. I have, however, striven to make the accounts furnish a faithful portrayal of the outlines of party movement and action, regarding the entire investigation simply as a preliminary to future work in the same field. They are written in the hope that they may to some slight extent stimulate interest in the whole question of the party history of the State, in which is to be found the explanation for many of the conditions and facts of the social and economic history of North Carolina, not only in the period covered by the investigation but in those extending to the present.

In the investigation I have placed my main reliance in the newspapers of the period and in a large number of letters to which I have access. I have, in addition, made very free use of all the secondary material available bearing on the subject. It is impossible in such a work as this to give credit individually, and I therefore take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to all the writers who have worked in this same period. I have made use of them all and am under heavy obligations to a number of them.

J. G. DE R. H.

Chapel Hill, Oct. 1, 1915.





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## PARTY POLITICS IN NORTH CAROLINA 1835-1860

### CHAPTER I

#### POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONVENTION OF 1835

The convention of 1835 marks the end of an era in North Carolina. In politics it closes one distinct period of history and naturally at the same time ushers in another and, in this case, a greatly different one. Called into existence by the people after a period of discontent which had lasted for nearly half a century and after a bitter struggle lasting nearly half as long which resulted even in a threat of revolution, the convention of 1835 was the token of a sectional victory—the triumph of the West over the East—but it was also much more. It was a great democratic victory—the triumph of the mass of the people of the State over a reactionary minority hitherto impregably entrenched and apparently invincible.

The convention was not, however, a clear and complete victory. Like practically every other body of its kind, it could not carry out fully the ideas of either party to the struggle. Compromise was inevitable since the conservative forces were still in power and were thus able to dictate terms. The West, too, elated with victory, was content with less than the needs and aspirations of democracy demanded and in addition, the western leaders, after all, could scarcely be called progressive, even as the word was then recognized elsewhere than in North Carolina, and so the work of the convention was only a step, although a great one, in a democratic direction.

It will be remembered that the Constitution of 1776 was in its practical operation far from democratic. The Bill of Rights contained indeed a significant statement of political theory, the importance of which should not be under-estimated, but which in practice was denied through the entire period which followed. It was: "That all political power

is vested in and derived from the people only." In its real sense this had never been even an ideal of North Carolina. When the constitution made the county, along with certain towns arbitrarily chosen, without reference to size or population, the basis for representation for both Senate and House of Commons, it followed inevitably that the government was not administered by representatives of the people but by the representatives of a section, for the county basis put controlling power in the hands of the East which as the older settled section had the larger number of counties and saw to it that the predominance was retained. Nor was government in time administered for the people. The West grew until it had a majority of the white population of the State, but government continued to be administered for the benefit of the East. And so it became true that a particular class, the landholders, of one section controlled the State.

How true these facts were may be seen from the following figures: Of the 64 counties of the State, 36 were east of Raleigh. While these 36 counties contained only 41 per cent of the voting population of the State, they furnished 58 per cent of the General Assembly. Their voting population was only 8.7 per cent of the total white population of the State but it chose a majority of the General Assembly and thus controlled the state government.

When the various restrictions and qualifications of the constitution are taken into account, the undemocratic nature of the instrument is still more apparent. While any freeman—and this included free persons of color—who paid his taxes was qualified to vote for a member of the House of Commons, the right to vote for a member of the Senate was restricted to those who owned a freehold of 50 acres. Here was a check upon any possible radical tendency of the lower house. There was little need to fear radicalism there, for, in order to avert any possible danger of such a thing, it was required that no person might be a member of that body unless he possessed in the county which he represented not less than one hundred acres of land in fee or for the term of his life. In order that



the Senate might be the stronghold of the landed, and hence, in the view of the framers of the constitution, the safe class, no person could be a senator unless he possessed in the county which he represented not less than 300 acres of land in fee. The governor, endowed with no power, limited in practically every official act by the Council of State, and entirely dependent upon the legislature which chose him for a term of one year, must nevertheless be a member of the landed class. "No person under 30 years of age, and who has not been a resident of this State above five years and having in the State a freehold in lands and tenements above the value of one thousand pounds, shall be eligible as Governor."

These are examples of the undemocratic provisions of the constitution of 1776. Others worthy of note were the provisions imposing a religious test for office-holders, designed to exclude not only atheists, but also Jews and Roman Catholics, and prohibiting any minister of the gospel from being a member of the General Assembly while he continued in the exercise of his ministerial functions.

Nowhere did the people exert any influence upon the government save in the election of the General Assembly. This body chose the governor and other officers, the judges being chosen for life. There were no state-wide campaigns and really no state-wide issues. Men chosen by localities for local reasons controlled the government and it is not to be wondered at that they should have done so in an entirely local way. Often the people in remote parts of the State had never heard the name of the man selected by the legislature to be the chief magistrate of the commonwealth, if commonwealth it could be called. Under the constitution there was no way provided for amendment and the reactionary party finally in part denied that the constitution could be amended. It was a sacred instrument, adopted by the fathers for all time; to change it was to lay hands upon the ark of the covenant, and such action would be attended with every evil result as a penalty.

The movement for reform which finally resulted in the

convention of 1835 was not entirely a local one, although it was dominated by local conditions. The West, because its vital economic interests demanded it, desired a large extension of the activities of the State. It wanted highways and railroads connecting it with the East to furnish an outlet for its produce, an inlet for the outside products that it wanted, and as a means of communication with the outside world. One statement of fact will sufficiently sum up the economic problem which confronted the West during this period. Salt brought in the East from 40 to 50 cents a bushel. In Iredell County, which used over five hundred bushels annually, it brought \$1.50. The same was true of every commodity in every western county. The West wanted relief from commercial dependence upon Virginia and South Carolina because of an intense state feeling, heightened by economic pressure. It wanted a system of public education that its children might be emancipated. In short it wanted North Carolina to become a land of opportunity that the exodus of its sons to other States might be checked. In spite of the fact that the West was increasing in population faster than the East, its loss of population was also much greater. The loss of North Carolina was appalling. It was estimated in 1815 that in the preceding twenty-five years 200,000 North Carolinians had gone to other States and in 1819 Archibald D. Murphey expressed the belief that as many as 500,000 had gone "to people the Wilderness of the West." Judge Gaston said in the convention that the case of North Carolina was the reverse of that of the lion's den in the fable; here all the tracks led away and none came back. The needs of the western part of North Carolina excited little interest or sympathy in the East where conditions were very different. Commercial dependence bothered that section little. Communication was much easier for obvious reasons and the economic system based upon slavery seemed at the time highly desirable. Aristocratic in tendency and in tradition, it also scorned the type of democracy which rapidly came to the front in the West.

For it was to democracy that the West came through economic pressure and to a less degree through the natural tendency of the frontier. And so this movement for reform while local in its inception may properly be regarded as a part of the rise of that new and militant democracy which we best know by the name Jacksonian. But because its animus and impetus were largely local the movement lagged behind that which appeared in many of the other States, nor did it go as far. Neither, be it said, did it affiliate with Jacksonian Democracy politically.

The convention of 1835, while its work was really a compromise, took a number of genuinely progressive and democratic steps. It abolished the county unit of representation and created a new system. The House of Commons henceforth was to consist of 120 members apportioned according to population, but every county, regardless of population, was entitled to one representative. As there were only 64 counties at that time, the retention of the county as the primary unit did not greatly interfere with the representative character of the body. The East still retained its advantage and as federal population included three-fifths of the slave population, the advantage was increased. The county basis was entirely abolished for the Senate thenceforth to be composed of 50 members, and a district basis substituted, the districts being laid off according to the value of property listed for taxes. Here again the advantage was potentially with the East.

The most democratic steps taken by the convention were the emancipation of the governorship from the legislature by putting the election of the chief executive in the hands of the people, and the adoption of a regular method of amendment of the constitution. Significant, too, of the new spirit was the submission of the changes made by the convention to the people for ratification. Another step of somewhat the same nature was the abolition of the restriction upon Roman Catholics, but no relief was given to Jews or other non-Christians. The old practice of annual elections was abolished, in



spite of the protests and even tears of Nathaniel Macon, who thought he saw the foundations of the temple of liberty falling about him, and a biennial system was substituted, accompanied by biennial sessions of the legislature. As the expenses at that time of the legislature ranged from a fourth to more than a half of the total expenditure of the State, this was an exceedingly important step. But the property qualifications of the members of the legislature and the governor remained unchanged as did the freehold qualification for voting for senators. The right to vote was taken away from free persons of color.

Governor Swain submitted the amended constitution to the people in November. Every eastern county but one, Granville, voted to reject, and of course every western county voted for ratification. The majority for ratification was 5,165. The election on the amendments, if one might judge from the newspapers, excited but little general interest. The truth is that the press and the people did not think in state-wide terms. There was no party issue here and while doubtless there was much local discussion in every county, it did not appear in the press.

Unquestionably the reforms of 1835 had many interesting and important effects outside the field of politics. A volume might be written on the one subject of internal improvements and another on education as affected by these reforms. But as the general subject limits the discussion here to politics, it is well to look at the matter from that standpoint alone. Nowhere were the effects more immediate, more interesting and more revolutionary.

Up to this time North Carolina never had had an opportunity in state affairs for united party action and party expression. As a matter of fact prior to 1835 there was in North Carolina no state party organization; there was only a state of mind. In presidential elections there had been more or less spasmodic and rudimentary attempts at organization, but state politics was entirely localized within the counties. The disastrous effects can readily be imagined. No real progress



was possible under such a system. The best approach to political union, therefore, that had hitherto been possible had been a bitter sectionalism which still further paralyzed every attempt at progress and which had driven thousands from the State. A stamp was then placed upon North Carolina politics, the effects of which survived for many years, if indeed we may yet speak in the past tense.

This was now changed. The gubernatorial elections began united and state-wide party politics which more than any other influence checked localism within North Carolina so far as it was checked. It made necessary the party convention and the effective party organization, which while possibly outgrown and hence unpopular now, were, nevertheless, at that time the best instruments then devised for expressing the collective will of the people, and they were thus genuinely democratic. The convention and the party organization also served as a check to localism. And finally came the biennial campaign for the governorship, which with all its faults was a great educational factor as well as an enemy both to localism and to sectionalism. Out of it came the party platform and party responsibility to the people, with happy effects both on government and on the people. All of this did not come at once. It was some years before there was a frank recognition of the fact of party government during which time it was still the custom to deplore the rise of party spirit. Sectionalism still remained and still remains; localism still remained and still remains; political ignorance was still present and has never disappeared; but North Carolina ceased to be a decadent community. Its progress was slow as compared with many of the States, but it moved forward and it has never retrograded. The era of parties has been the era of progress. Much of this was due to the fact that party division was close, for each acted not only as a restraint upon the other but also as a spur. The tracks still pointed away from the door but there were hardly as many tracks. The penny-wise policy, characteristic of the old regime, was not abandoned, but it was modified seriously

as with genuine democratic spirit the people learned the needs of the State and began to recognize the responsibilities of a commonwealth. The hatred of taxation, however beneficial the results might be, remained still to confound the plans of those leaders who dreamed of a period of great expansion and great progress in which the people of the State would enter upon the enjoyment of their noble heritage. This fact must be constantly borne in mind in considering the whole of the following period.

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The party history of the period cannot possibly be clearly understood without a knowledge of the social and economic conditions of the State at its beginning, and, in addition, a view of the general political tendencies of the people will be valuable. Because of the very nature of the conditions, we unfortunately have all too small a record of them, but enough material has come to us to indicate at least the general outlines.

In 1835 North Carolina was almost at a standstill compared to the other States. The checked growth in population was indicative of the arrested development in other respects. Each census had of course shown a growth of total population, but standing third in relative rank in this respect at the time of the first census in 1790, in 1800 the State had dropped to fourth place, had maintained that position in 1810, had dropped to fifth in 1820, and in 1830 went to sixth and in 1840 stood seventh. The figures are as follows:

<i>Census</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Increase</i>
1790.....	393,751.....	
1800.....	473,103.....	21.1
1810.....	555,500.....	16.2
1820.....	638,829.....	15.
1830.....	737,987.....	15.5
1840.....	753,419.....	2.1

In every census period certain counties showed a loss. In the first period Bertie, Caswell, Craven, Halifax, Jones, Martin, Mecklenburg, Nash, Pasquotank, Tyrrell, and Wilkes, all lost, some of them heavily; in the second, Bertie, Bladen, Halifax, Hertford, Sampson, Tyrrell and Warren; in the third, Bertie, Chatham, Franklin, Greene, Hyde, and New Hanover; and in the fourth, Currituck and Rowan. It remained for the census of 1840 to show the desperate condition in which the State really was. In that period the

following counties, 31 out of a total of 68 lost: Bertie, Brunswick, Buncombe, Burke, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Currituck, Duplin, Granville, Halifax, Hertford, Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, Macon, Martin, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Northampton, Onslow, Pasquotank, Person, Pitt, Richmond, Rowan, Tyrrell and Washington. Of course some of these losses in every period are to be explained by division of the counties, but with that taken into consideration, the situation was appalling. Another disquieting fact in connection with the population was that the negro increase was more rapid than the white, the total growth of the negro population from 1790 to 1840 being an increase of 154.4 per cent while the per cent of increase of the white was only 64.4. The figures are as follows:

		<i>Per Cent Increase</i>
Census of 1790:		
White .....	288,204	
Free Black .....	4,975	
Slave .....	100,572	
Census of 1800:		
White .....	337,764	17.19
Free Black .....	7,043	41.56
Slave .....	133,296	32.53
Census of 1810:		
White .....	376,410	11.44
Free Black .....	10,266	45.75
Slave .....	168,824	26.65
Census of 1820:		
White .....	419,200	11.36
Free Black .....	14,612	42.33
Slave .....	205,017	21.43
Census of 1830:		
White .....	472,843	12.79
Free Black .....	19,543	33.74
Slave .....	245,601	19.79
Census of 1840:		
White .....	484,870	2.54



Free Black .....	22,732	16.31
Slave .....	245,817	.08

The explanation of this slow growth did not lie in a low birth rate. Although vital statistics are lacking, there is no doubt of the fecundity of North Carolinians of that day; large families were the rule throughout the State. Rather the explanation is to be sought in the steady emigration from the State to the West and South and in the absence of immigration; the outside world offering many inducements to North Carolinians, while the State itself offered few to natives and none to outsiders.

That such was the case is not wonderful. Internal conditions were such that opportunity was denied to all save a favored few. Means of communication were lacking, as were the means of education, and as a result, with every natural resource and opportunity, the State was poor and steadily growing poorer, and in relative rank as to wealth was lower than in respect to population. Not only was it poor, however: it was worse. It was ignorant. And its ignorance spread like a pall over the whole State dwarfing for a time every promise of growth, and retarding irresistibly every forward movement. Joseph Caldwell, not a man given to rash speech, said in 1829 that North Carolina was 300 years behind the rest of the world in enlightenment, and while his estimate may have been excessive, the general truth contained in it is undeniable.

The effects of the poor facilities for communication and commerce generally have already been intimated. Transportation cost so much that for a large part of the State agriculture, necessarily the main resource of the State and particularly so because of the presence of slavery, was profitless save to furnish one's own supplies. A barrel of flour in 1829 in the town of Hillsboro just about paid for a barrel of salt. Manifestly, there could be but small profit in growing grain. And so it was with everything else. In one way grain was profitable, and so grain was grown and fruit was

grown—to furnish food for the distilleries, hundreds and thousands of which poured out their debauching flood throughout the State. In 1811 there were 159 in Edgecombe alone and more than 50 in Caswell. It is scarcely necessary to add that drunkenness was common.

While the prevailing ignorance and the sectional struggle already discussed made it very difficult for the enlightened to accomplish anything towards relieving the situation, the State was nevertheless affected by the new spirit following upon the war of 1812, and in 1815 it entered upon a policy of aiding internal improvements. This was done under the inspiring leadership of that far-seeing dreamer and statesman, Archibald D. Murphey. In consequence the State in a short time became a stockholder in a large number of companies and it also created an internal improvement fund. Thus in a sense the State became committed to a policy of internal improvement, but the immediate results were far from encouraging, since most of the enterprises failed and the movement for a time received a set-back. But the agitation was productive of good results in that the majority of the newspapers and a large number of influential men were educated by it and became firmly committed to the cause.

In other ways the State was little affected. Agriculture, even in the East where the problem was not nearly so acute, still remained of the most primitive sort and, under the blighting curse of slave labor land deteriorated steadily and rapidly. In spite of the fact that a million acres and more of new land was taken up between 1815 and 1833, the total value of the land was less at the later date by \$106,048.80. One reason for this will be discussed later in another connection, but the main reason is to be found in the words of the memorial drawn up by a committee of an internal improvement convention in 1833: "Her wasted fields, her deserted farms, her ruined towns, her departing sons, all reproach us with supine neglect." Wiley in 1852 described the situation thus:

A purchaser of lands could easily find a seller in almost every owner; indeed almost every house and plantation exhibited in their decaying aspect the most unmistakable words, "For Sale." This melancholy sentence was ploughed in deep black characters upon the whole State and even the flag that waved over the Capitol, indicating the sessions of the Assembly, was regarded by our neighbors of Virginia and South Carolina as an auctioneer's sign!

The reward of labor had "ceased to be a stimulus to industry and enterprise," and so a steady tide of emigration rolled away from the State carrying enterprise, industry, youth, and ambition, not to mention the actual wealth which went in their wake to build new commonwealths on the frontier to the lasting impoverishment of the old mother State. A gentleman in Asheville wrote in 1827 that every day saw a stream of emigrants moving by, sometimes as many as fifteen wagons going together and the account might be duplicated many times.

Educationally, the State in 1835 was scarcely moving, if indeed there was any movement. That in part explains the failure of internal improvements. As "Old Field" said in the *Raleigh Register* in 1833, "The people will have to learn to spell internal improvements before they can comprehend the meaning of the term." The elaborate plans of Murphey in 1817 failed, but in 1825 the Literary Fund was established, a step in the right direction it is true, but one not highly productive at first except to the legislature which year after year used its proceeds to pay its own members. Year after year through half a century the legislature had displayed utter apathy toward everything which meant the upbuilding of the State and its people. Its time was consumed with small things almost entirely and in the playing of what we call at a later date "peanut politics." Its expenses meanwhile, were nearly always more than half the total expenditure of the government. In his last message to the legislature in 1836, Governor Swain said:

The history of our State legislation during the first half

century of our political existence, will exhibit little more to posterity than the annual imposition of taxes amounting to less than \$100,000, one-half of which constituted the reward of the legislative bodies by which they were levied, while the remainder was applied to sustain the train of officers who superintend the machinery of government. The establishment of schools for the convenient instruction of youth, and the development of our internal resources by means beyond the reach of individual enterprise, will seem scarcely to have been regarded as proper objects of legislative concern.

In the State in 1835, there was not one school house for every 15 miles square, not a single high school, and only a few good academies, the whole number of the latter being certainly less than half and possibly less than a third of the number of counties. In 1811 while two-thirds of the adult white population of Edgecombe County could read, only one-half the adult white males and less than one-third of the women could write. In the whole State, according to Wiley, nearly every tenth white man was totally illiterate and nearly one-half the white people of every county were uneducated. The people had no thirst for knowledge; in many cases it was dreaded, despised, and hated. We are again indebted to Wiley for an expressive description. Said he:

The educated and uneducated grew up with a carefully inculcated dislike for home—the latter looking to other States as opening wider fields for exertion in the race for improvement; the former taught to believe that talents and requirements could not be appreciated in North Carolina. It is no exaggeration to say that the State was a great encampment while the inhabitants looked upon themselves as tented only for a season and every year the highways were crowded with hundreds of emigrants whose sacrifices and losses in selling out and moving would have paid for 20 years their share of public taxes sufficient to have given to their homes all the fancied advantages of those regions where they went.



The results were just those to be expected, and well might Robert Potter say in the Legislature of 1836 in his strong and statesmanlike speech advocating the passage of his bill for the establishment of an agricultural college in the State:

I will not say North Carolina is a great State and I am proud of her because she is not. . . . If the genius of North Carolina were now to present herself to you, who are charged with the destinies of her people, instead of the majesty of a guardian goddess—instead of a radiant brow, and an eye flashing light and dignity on this assembly, you would mark her with a pallid front, and “sad and shrouded eye,” and in the hollow accents of despair, she would demand of you, “Why sit ye here all the while idle?” Why assemble here from session to session and expend your time upon ephemeral objects while you neglect the very salvation of the Republic? Why meet you here from year to year to scuffle over subjects unimportant to the public and trifling in themselves, or to squabble about the disposition of a clerkship or a judgeship whilst the people for whom all this is intended—for whose benefit Government was established, laws erected, and judges appointed—whilst the people are left to rust in primeval ignorance—“rotting from sire to son and from age to age,” deaf as the adder and dark as Erebus? She would tell you you were a degraded and despised community; but only so because you would be so.

Let us now look at some of the aspects of the case other than those already mentioned. We have seen the general character of the legislature during the period and we need no further information to be certain that the system of taxation was inequitable as well as inefficient. Its inefficiency made it dear to the people for they wanted no other sort, but they nevertheless complained bitterly of the system and made its inequity an excuse for the most widespread and shamelessly open evasion and fraud. Much of the land was not listed at all and much more was greatly undervalued. The poll tax—most inequitable of all taxes—played a large part in the system, bringing in more than the land, but thousands of slaves were not listed for it. It is doubtful if ever another

community hated taxation as did the North Carolina of that period, and so no legislature would have dared reform the system even had they ever felt any inclination to do so, just as no legislature dared to spend money. The attitude of the small politicians of the period—and most of the politicians were of the small variety—towards the spread of enlightenment is interesting. No plain citizen from outside the political group could ever call one of them to account or tell the truth about one, without the likelihood of an impassioned statement from the quasi-statesman concerned that his accuser was striking a blow at the liberties of the people through the party which he himself represented; while no one was able to speak the truth as to the condition of the State without the probability of being accused of a lack of patriotism, of falsehood, or of worse.

In the State in 1832 were twenty-five newspapers, distributed as follows: one each in Rutherfordton, Charlotte, Salem, Greensboro, Hillsboro, Milton, Wilmington, Washington, Tarboro, Edenton, Halifax, Windsor, Oxford, and Warrenton; and two each in Salisbury, Fayetteville, New Bern and Elizabeth City. Raleigh had three. Not nearly the whole number, however, could be regarded as at all permanent and all had very small subscription lists because in truth North Carolina had no reading public, not even a public that read newspapers. Another interesting indication along somewhat the same line is furnished by the postal receipts of the State. In 1831 the total receipts from North Carolina were \$28,750, while in Virginia they were \$84,078, in South Carolina \$47,993, in Tennessee \$31,423, and in Georgia \$54,233.

There were, however, certain hopeful signs, some of which have been mentioned already. In 1835 the religious condition of the State was better than it had ever been and was improving rapidly. The Baptist State Convention had just been founded, the Episcopal Church long in a seemingly hopeless state of depression and apparently moribund, was reviving, and the Methodist and Presbyterian communions were ex-

tending their influence widely. In many ways the moral and humane sense of the people was beginning to manifest itself as in the movement against maiming, corporal punishment and imprisonment for debt; for a penitentiary, for an insane asylum, and a school for the deaf and dumb, and for temperance.

Coming finally to political conditions, we find that they bore a normal relation to the social and economic conditions. Hugh McQueen in his address before the literary societies of the University in 1838 made this enlightening statement:

Every unfledged nestling in politics turns with an aye of solicitation to a seat in the State Legislature. Every politician of mature age, whose character is not in a positive degree insufferable is looking forward with tumultuous eagerness to a place in the Hall of National Representatives, to a situation in one of the Cabinet departments, or in the diplomatic service of the country. Every decent citizen is panting for some post of public preferment and profit, those who have not been sufficiently fortunate to obtain any other post are posting their way with a provident share of speed to the Republic of Texas. Politics, indeed, appear to swallow every other interest, and the whole surface of the earth seems covered with politicians as Egypt once swarmed with locusts.

In spite of all the interest which the people of North Carolina felt in politics, there was no sense of responsibility for the needs of the State; such was the indifference that usually there was scarcely a pretense of interest in the subject. Patriotism may have been present in the people—in view of the later history of the State undoubtedly was—but it was the type of patriotism that makes a people ready and even willing to die for the State, but not to live for it. In war they could be heroic with a simplicity which is one of the attributes of greatness; in peace, they could not even be, or rather were not, good citizens in the fullest sense of the term. Civic responsibility, civic pride, and civic ambition all were lacking. The question why this was so is fairly

easily answered. Quoting Doctor Wiley again, "Down to the period of the Revolution, the people of North Carolina were united in nothing but in dislike of the reigning powers; were bound together by no general sympathies except a common love of liberty." This had unquestionably formed a state habit of mind. At the period of which we speak, the State as a whole was ignorant, shockingly so, even for that time, and ignorance bred a type of individualism that knew nothing of community spirit and that apparently could not develop it. The only community sense that the mass of the people of the State possessed in this period was a universal desire to be let alone and permitted to "gang their ain gait" and a common hatred of any movement which might require the raising of taxes. Herein lies the explanation of the political and social immobility of the State. It was this which made exiles of thousands of her sons who were ambitious for themselves and their community. It was this condition which made North Carolina, in the words of Henry Clay, "a good State to come from," and which gave South Carolinians, and a little later Virginians, under their breath, the opportunity to call North Carolina "the Rip Van Winkle of the States." It was this that made many forward-looking North Carolinians bitter; that made Archibald D. Murphey write in 1819 to Thomas Ruffin:

I am getting disgusted with North Carolina; and if things do not change for the better, I shall quit the State as soon as I get my debts paid off. I have just completed a paper for the principal engineer on the ways and means for making her a great State. But I see clearly that it is all idle labor, at least for this generation. Those who labor now will meet with nothing but vexation, chagrin and disgust. Another generation will profit by their labors. The spirit of the present is radically mean and grovelling.

Another example of the same feeling is contained in the following quotation from a letter written by a North Caro-



linian living in the far South to a brother who was still in the State:

I congratulate you upon your appointment. I hope it will not turn your head, as I do not think that any honor North Carolina can bestow should have that effect upon any one so well poised as you, and who is so conscious of the perfect contempt excited by her niggardly policy and dearth of high and ennobling patriotism. I was almost in hopes that her wise men would have abolished her Supreme Court, and by that means have driven from the State the eminent men who yet linger within her limits, thereby leaving her barren of talent and a prey to the silly demagogues who rule her destinies.

This then was the condition that confronted the real leaders of the period. Not all the great men produced by North Carolina left the State. There were many among those who remained who dreamed great dreams for the State, who saw clearly and with a statesman's vision. As far as the people themselves were concerned it is undoubtedly true that the homely and individual virtues were possessed by them in a high degree. They were honest to the core, save where taxes were concerned, simple and unassuming, in the main industrious, and on the whole God-fearing. Their lack was a community lack of breadth of view and community consciousness.

In December, 1837, over the signature of "Mentor," a prominent North Carolinian began a series of articles which ran in the *Standard* during several months. In them was displayed a remarkably clear understanding of the defects in the attitude of the people. The first paper began:

It is discouraging to witness the apathy which prevails in North Carolina about all State affairs. There is no subject connected with the operations of the General Government which does not enlist the zeal of our politicians and command the attention of those who have leisure to discuss it; whilst the more immediate concerns of the people of North Carolina are wholly disregarded, or else noticed in a manner

that is even stronger proof of indifference than absolute silence. I do not complain that the politics of the Nation attracts attention. Far from it. But my complaint is that there is a general indifference to the policy of the State; that the latter is wholly absorbed by the former interest.

If a sense of duty and feelings of patriotism ever move a public man of this State to venture upon any plans for her aggrandizement—to throw himself against a current of narrow prejudices, strengthened by long habit; what is the support our press gives him in the struggle? That portion of it which agrees with him in National politics perhaps may send forth one or two plaudits, whilst the other is satisfied with an exhibition of extraordinary liberality in venturing to believe that he is really more honest and patriotic than they had believed was possible in any man of his politics.

A later number of the series contained the following:

I am unable to assign all the reasons for it, yet the fact is undeniable that our State in general exhibits a lively sensibility of late years to the question of who shall be our next President whilst her own leading men manifest little anxiety about what is to be the destiny of North Carolina. We are all in theory advocates of State rights and yet we do not seem to consider that State rights are secure only when there are State interest to protect. We deprecate the patronage and power of the national government, (I speak not of this or that Administration) whilst there are few if any who do not greatly enlarge that patronage and increase that power by infusing into all our State elections the party politics of the general government. We can reckon to a man the sentiments of our State representatives in reference to those questions of National policy that divide us into parties; but I doubt if the best informed men on such topics can tell the opinions of any 10 members of the next Assembly upon any great question of our State affairs. We spend our time, talents, and money, to denounce the encroachments of Federal power; to uphold or oppose the policy that is recommended by our National officers, and I do not complain of it; popular vigilance is the best security for public liberty; but we leave little or no time,

we give no portion of our talents or money to advocate the interests of North Carolina, and establish a policy for the State.

These two paragraphs best describe the basis of politics in North Carolina in 1835 and for some years thereafter.

With this view of the general situation in North Carolina we can turn our attention to party development.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1836

The North Carolina legislature of 1835 was elected while the convention was still in session and met before the result of the ratification election was known. The Democrats, or the friends of Jackson's administration, as it is proper to call them, since that was the dividing line of parties, were in a large majority in each house and elected their candidates for speakers without difficulty, William D. Moseley of Lenoir, being chosen in the Senate and William H. Haywood of Wake, in the House of Commons. Richard Dobbs Spaight, Jr., was chosen governor over William B. Meares. Many of the party desired Moseley for governor, but he declined even to consider being a candidate. Governor Spaight came of a distinguished family, being the son of Richard Dobbs Spaight, who besides being governor himself, had played a very prominent part in the political life of the State during the preceding generation. He had been killed some years before in a duel with John Stanly. The son was educated at the University where he graduated in 1815. He became a lawyer and almost at once entered politics, being elected to the House of Commons in 1819. He then served three years in the Senate. He had also been one term in Congress from 1823 to 1825. From that time he served continuously in the state senate until his election as governor. He had twice been defeated for speaker and he had also been a receptive candidate for governor and for United States senator in 1830. At first, like most eastern men, he had strongly opposed a convention, but he became converted and the bill was finally passed largely through his influence. He was a member of the convention and was chairman of the committee on rules which acted as a steering committee. He was not a candidate for governor at the time of his election and in fact did not know that his name was to be presented.



He was an ardent supporter of Van Buren which was in North Carolina the final test of good Democracy.

Strong as the Democrats were in the legislature, the congressional elections of 1835 gave much encouragement to their opponents. Of the delegation of thirteen, the Whigs elected seven. William B. Shepherd of Pasquotank, Ebenezer Pettigrew of Washington, Edmund Deberry of Montgomery, Augustine H. Shepperd of Stokes, Abraham Rencher of Chatham, James Graham of Rutherford, and Lewis Williams of Surry. The Democratic members were Jesse A. Bynum of Halifax, Jesse Speight of Greene, James J. McKay of Bladen, M. T. Hawkins of Warren, William Montgomery of Orange, and Henry W. Connor of Catawba. And in North Carolina at this time, the complexion of the congressional delegation was regarded as of tremendous importance, and victory there was usually of far greater interest than carrying a state election.

An explanation of the situation in the State as concerns national affairs will not only make the reasons for this attitude clear, but will also best serve to explain the whole political situation. North Carolina had not accepted Jackson unreservedly and many of his acts had alienated whole sections of his followers. This was particularly true of his action in the case of nullification in South Carolina, and to a much greater degree, of his destruction of the United States Bank. As far as nullification itself was concerned, there was really but little division of sentiment, but opinion varied as to the President's method of meeting it. In respect to the bank, North Carolina feeling had changed greatly in the years which had intervened since its creation. At first universally suspected and even hated, in recent years it had been gaining ground steadily. Branches had been established in the more important places and of greater import, men like Mangum and Gaston favoring it threw the weight of their influence in its behalf and sentiment for it spread. The matter now brought about an interesting and important series of happenings.

Willie P. Mangum was at this time one of the most important figures in the political life of North Carolina. Born in Orange County, May 10, 1792, he was prepared for college in Fayetteville and Raleigh, and graduated at the University in 1815. Studying law with Judge Duncan Cameron he was admitted to the bar in 1817 and was immediately successful, but his inclinations were all towards politics and in 1818 and again in 1819 he was a member of the House of Commons from Orange and took a prominent place. In 1819, two years after he received his license, he was elected a judge of the Superior Court over George E. Badger and William Norwood, but only remained on the bench for one year. In 1823 he defeated Daniel L. Barringer for Congress and was re-elected in 1825, defeating Rev. Josiah Crodup, a Baptist minister and one of the most accomplished politicians in the State. In 1824 Mangum was a strong supporter of Crawford for the presidency and voted for him when the election went to the House of Representatives. In March, 1826, he resigned and in August was appointed by Governor Burton to the Superior bench to succeed Judge Paxton, but the legislature failed to confirm the election and chose Robert Strange. In 1828 he was an elector on the Jackson ticket, and was a strong Jackson supporter. In the same year he was chosen without opposition to succeed Thomas Ruffin on the Superior bench and served until 1830 when he resigned to become a candidate for United States senator. He withdrew in favor of Iredell as far as Macon's vacant seat was concerned but in 1830 he was elected over Governor John Owen, Judge John R. Donnell, Richard D. Spaight, and Montford Stokes. He was at this time still a Jackson man, but as time went on, he drifted away from Jackson and the Democratic party. He was not a protectionist and so was not in full sympathy with Henry Clay, but while not a nullifier, he opposed Jackson's South Carolina policy and violently opposing his bank policy, voted for the resolution of censure. As North Carolina Democrats made support of Jackson and consequent hatred of the bank and of

nullification not only cardinal virtues, but required doctrine, Mangum was soon entirely out of sympathy with the Jackson wing of the old Republican party, and when the legislature of 1834, after a very long and most bitterly contested struggle instructed him and his colleague, Bedford Brown, to vote for Benton's resolution to expunge the resolution of censure, he denied absolutely the right of the General Assembly to take such action and announced on the floor of the Senate his intention of ignoring the instructions as of no validity. Bedford Brown, on the other hand, accepted the instructions, which accorded with his inclinations, and endorsed the principle involved. His term expired at this session and he was triumphantly re-elected.

Bedford Brown was scarcely a less striking figure in North Carolina politics than Mangum. Born in Caswell County in 1792, he was a student at the University for one year, and the next, 1815, he was elected to the House of Commons from Caswell along with Romulus M. Saunders, another prominent figure of the time, and served for three terms. He was a member of the House again in 1823, and in 1828 was elected to the state Senate to succeed Bartlett Yancey. The following year he was re-elected and was chosen speaker, and while filling that position, a deadlock having occurred in the election of a United States senator to succeed John Branch who had entered Jackson's cabinet as secretary of the navy, he was elected to the position. He was already a strong supporter of Jackson and while in the Senate became his close personal friend.

The difference between the views of the two senators gives a good idea of the opinions of the two factions in North Carolina soon to become political parties. Brown was a strict constructionist and a strong State's rights man of views very similar to those of Nathaniel Macon. This type formed the Democratic party. Mangum, on the other hand, represented the latitudinarian, anti-Jackson, pro-bank group which soon formed the Whig party. Brown's supporters were mainly in the east and hence were those who had fairly consistently



opposed constitutional reform in the State, while Mangum found his chief support in the West which had supported Jackson in 1824 but abandoned him after 1828, largely because the East had turned a somersault and accepted him. The West, therefore, became Whig territory, and the organization formed for securing constitutional reform, became a potent factor in state politics after reform was secured. Indeed, it was this which made the State Whig for the long period which followed.

But to return to the question of instructions, Mangum, conscious of the support of the anti-Jackson men in the State, and with constitutional reform in sight which would greatly increase the political power of his followers, relied upon the prospects of immediate victory. To the Jackson supporters he at once became a hated object, the feeling being sharply intensified by the fact that he had formerly been himself a supporter of the President. Wherever possible, pressure was brought to bear by his opponents. The grand jury of Edgecombe County passed a vote of lack of confidence in him and calling upon him to resign and the Democratic press attacked him sharply, suggesting the same course.

Soon after the election of Governor Spaight and the adjournment of the legislature of 1835, the question of candidates for the first popular election was raised. The two political influences in the State of greatest power were the *Standard*, a paper established in Raleigh in 1834 by Philo White, and now edited by Thomas Loring, its political position being best understood by its motto, which was: "The Constitution and the Union of the States—they must be preserved," and the *Register*, established in Raleigh in 1799 by Joseph Gales and continued under the editorial control of Weston R. Gales. The latter had been at the time of its establishment a Republican paper, but it was at this time definitely aligned with the opposition to Jackson who called themselves National Republicans, but were already being generally called Whigs. In a sense it may be regarded as the organ of the party. Both papers were very active in calling



attention to the names of suitable persons for the governorship and the other papers of the State were not less enterprising. Almost without discussion the pro-Van Buren, or rather pro-Jackson, forces settled upon Governor Spaight for re-election. Indeed it was almost necessary that they should, for in ability, in character, and in record they had no better man and they could not afford to neglect him. The Democrats of Macon County held a meeting in February, 1836, and placed his name in nomination and their example was followed by Lincoln and Warren almost immediately. Early in March the *Standard* placed his name at the head of its editorial columns as its candidate and thereafter none of the party questioned the wisdom of the choice while Democratic meetings in a majority of the counties definitely endorsed him.

There was more difficulty in choosing a candidate for the opposition. Mangum's name was mentioned in 1835, but he did not desire the position, or care to leave the Senate. In addition, he would have been a dangerous candidate on account of the heat aroused by the instructions question. He was, moreover, in a sense, already a candidate for vindication and would not help the ticket. He was, however, denounced by the *Standard* as a "blue light Federalist speechifier during the war." In a short while the anti-administration candidates narrowed down to Edward B. Dudley of New Hanover, and Thomas G. Polk of Rowan, who had been named by Fayetteville and Salisbury papers respectively. Early in January Polk wrote a letter to the *Western Carolinian*, which had nominated him and, declining to have his name considered, endorsed Dudley for the nomination. Two weeks later a Whig mass meeting in Wake County formally nominated Dudley as a supporter of Hugh L. White of Tennessee for the Presidency. This was really the keynote of the campaign; local issues had no part in the choice of candidate and the candidates appealed for support on the ground of the strength of their loyalty to the presidential candidates of their respective parties. When Dud-

ley wrote accepting the Wake nomination, he said nothing whatever about state issues or the needs of the State, but devoted nearly all the space of his letter to denunciation of Van Buren, saying among other things, "To say all in one sentence: He is not one of us. He is a Northern man in soul, in principle, and in action, with not one feeling of sympathy or interest for the South." The *Standard* denounced this view as narrow, unpatriotic and entirely characteristic of a "nullification candidate."

Edward B. Dudley was a native of Onslow, which county he represented in the House of Commons in 1811 and 1813, and in the Senate in 1814. He then moved to Wilmington where he at once became prominent. He represented New Hanover in the House of Commons in 1816, 1817, 1834, and 1835. He also served one term in Congress from 1829 to 1831, but refused to return on the ground that Congress was not a fit place for any person who wanted to be honest. Dudley was a man of great wealth, of liberal and large views, of genial disposition, but at the same time of a firmness and courage that at times approximated very closely to obstinacy. He was a man of large frame and imposing presence and while he was possessed of no remarkable ability, he had a great fund of practical common sense, a possession which has rightly been called uncommon. As was to be expected he was an earnest opponent of instructions to senators in theory and had opposed it in practice. He was a staunch friend of railroads and other internal improvements and at this time was president of the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, soon to become the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad. It was his interest in internal improvements which made him especially acceptable to the West.

The campaign continued throughout the spring and summer and was of course an entirely new thing for North Carolina. The candidates were not on the stump, but they were constantly writing letters and conferring with interested politicians. A feature of the campaign was the banquets at various places where great enthusiasm was aroused. But

nowhere were state issues discussed if indeed it can truthfully be said that there were any state issues. The national political situation swamped and overwhelmed that of the State. It was indeed a far cry to that time when men resigned from the Senate, the Cabinet, and even from the chief justiceship of the Supreme Court of the United States to run for governor or even lesser state offices. The change of attitude undoubtedly helped the national government, but it proved highly disastrous for the States.

The campaign was accompanied by many charges and counter charges, and the press was unsparing in its criticism and denunciation of opponents. Both the *Standard* and the *Register* were inclined to carry the matter rather far, but each had much to say of the offenses of the other. The *Standard* early in the year, under the heading, "Editorial Courtesy," had the following to say on the subject:

It is our sincere desire to be on terms of at least editorial courtesy with all our brethren of the type. But when an editor of a paper loses all respect for himself and his vocation, and so far violates the common decencies of society, as to use the billingsgate of a fish market, or the ribaldry of a tap-room, in combatting the arguments of a contemporary, we have laid it down as a rule for guidance, during the whole course of our editorial life, to decline a contest with such a man. And whenever an editor has assailed us from behind a mud-battery, with the weapons he may have grasped from the ditch, it has been our practice to pass by on the other side. For the odds would be against us, not being skilled in such warfare, nor having the material with which to carry it on. But even were it otherwise, we could acquire neither reputation nor glory in obtaining a victory in such a contest—for however well directed might be our discharges, the enemy would be but revelling in his wonted element! We would always prefer putting up with the scurrility of a chimney-sweep rather than soil our garments with chastizing him.

During the campaign the Democrats attempted to prove that Dudley was inclined to abolitionist views because as a member of the legislature he had voted for a resolution which



condemned any interference by Congress with slavery in the District of Columbia, but which conceded the right of Congress to interfere. Dudley, interestingly enough, made the identical charge against Van Buren upon almost the same ground. Leading Democrats in the State had already drawn from Van Buren a statement of his views on the question which were substantially the same as those held by Dudley and the majority of North Carolinians. In other words it was entirely a feigned issue. In the same way nullification played a large part in the campaign. The Whigs charged Spaight with having attempted to establish a newspaper in the State in the interest of nullification. This was disproved, and the Democrats were equally unfortunate in their attempts to prove that the Whig leaders almost without exception had nullification sympathies. They were, however, able to make considerable capital of the fact that Calhoun and the other South Carolina nullifiers were opposing Van Buren and acting in other ways with the Whigs. Just at this time Calhoun had an exceedingly small following in North Carolina. He had been very strong in the State prior to the nullification controversy and his break with Jackson, and he was destined again to be accepted as a leader by those who now opposed him most bitterly, but in 1836 both factions disclaimed him, the administration followers with peculiar bitterness. The *Standard* never lost an opportunity of abuse and criticism, the following extract being characteristic: "There was a time when Mr. Calhoun was suspected and when the patriots of our country dreaded his criminal ambition. But that time is past; he is now known; and is as much entitled to the political confidence of the American people, as Judas Iscariot was to that of the faithful eleven—and no more."

Other questions which entered the campaign were the bank and senatorial instructions. The last-mentioned was practically the only subject brought up which bore any relation to a state issue. This was so because of the Mangum incident. His term in the Senate was about to expire, and he



was a candidate for re-election. The Democrats, therefore, sought to arouse as much feeling on the subject as possible.

Both sides had much to say of the evils of party spirit. The Democrats being in office, naturally deprecated it more than their opponents who were trying to get in. In 1835 the *Standard* had condemned the opposition very harshly for attempting to elect the speaker of the House of Commons and it now had much to say in the same vein about the opposition to Governor Spaight's re-election.

The North Carolina Whigs generally had accepted Judge Hugh L. White as the most suitable opponent for Van Buren and practically every leader was pledged to him and nearly every Whig meeting endorsed his candidacy. But when General Harrison's name was brought out, a strong disposition favorable to him was apparent, not that he was a first choice; it is doubtful if the Whigs really had any choice; still he was regarded as a good compromise candidate in the event of the election's being thrown into the House of Representatives. In other words, the Whigs wanted to defeat Van Buren; if with White, well and good; if not, with someone else, whoever he might be. Jackson, after all, was the national as well as state issue with the North Carolina Whigs, as to a great extent he was the issue with the North Carolina Democrats, for many of the latter were not wildly enthusiastic over Van Buren except as Jackson's choice for his successor.

The state election came in August, and its results were in doubt for some time. Finally it was clearly evident that Dudley was elected though his majority—4,043—was not known until the legislature canvassed the vote after the national election. The complexion of the legislature remained in doubt until the session began, but both sides claimed control.

The election returns are interesting. The following western counties were carried by Spaight: Ashe, Caswell, Haywood, Lincoln, Macon, Mecklenburg, Person, Rockingham, Surry and Yancey. Person always voted with the East

but not so the others, and the split shows interesting Democratic strength in the West. Dudley carried the following eastern counties: Beaufort, Brunswick, Carteret, Camden, Columbus, Granville, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Richmond, Tyrrell and Washington. He was an eastern man and was well and favorably known in that section of the State, a fact which of course counted for much in the election. But the general result does indicate that sectionalism was decreasing and points to the existence of two political parties geographically coincident.

The Democrats were greatly upset at the result. They made many explanations of which the following, appearing in the *Standard* in September, while not quite typical, is not much more laughable than many others, and probably it had much more truth. In any event it furnishes a shocking commentary upon political conditions in the State: "They even condescended in some distant parts of the State where the people were not familiar with the names and policies of the candidates to represent Governor Spaight as the candidate of the opposition and General Dudley as the candidate of the Administration party." The truth is that the day of the Democrats in state affairs was over for many a year. The tardiness of the emancipation of the West had permitted the growth and development of a party there which in alliance with certain elements of the East could easily control the State, and under normal conditions it did so for 14 years.

The election was watched with great interest outside the State as bearing upon the national campaign. There was little comfort for the administration. Van Buren wrote Bedford Brown that the administration could not deceive itself as to what the result indicated for November so far as North Carolina was concerned. But in the State the Democrats did not lose heart. As national politics had dominated the state campaign, at least so far as the leaders were concerned, the chief interest of the year was still to come in the presidential election. So they lost no spirit, but

rather redoubled their exertions. The Whigs, on the other hand, being over-confident, grew slack. The Democrats were fortunate in enlisting Nathaniel Macon in the cause, and he finally consented to be a candidate for elector on the Van Buren ticket. The old leader was heart and soul for Van Buren just as in later years, he had been for Jackson, and his presence on the ticket undoubtedly helped it. The Democrats made much of it, and the last political effort of Macon was crowned with success. He died the next year.

The election resulted in the selection of Democratic electors with a popular majority of 9,240. It was the expiring flicker of Jacksonian Democracy in North Carolina national elections, the last triumph of the Democrats in a national election there for twenty years. Then, under the pressure of new national problems, the State returned to the Democratic fold, but the Democracy of 1856 was not Jacksonian; rather it was that of Calhoun.

The geographical division of the vote was somewhat the same as in the state election. In the West the Democrats gained Buncombe, Orange and Stokes, and in the East they gained Columbus, and lost Pitt. Their majorities in many cases were, however, considerably increased. The explanation lies wholly in the hold of Jackson upon the State.

The legislature as elected turned out to be a tie between the parties on joint ballot, but for some reason not known, John B. Muse of Pasquotank, a Whig, resigned before the meeting, and his successor was a Democrat. This gave that party a majority of one before the successor was elected. The Senate chose Hugh Waddell of Orange, a Whig, as speaker over W. D. Moseley, and the House of Commons elected William H. Haywood over William A. Graham. Governor Spaight in his message endorsed public education and internal improvements, both of which were to be the main reliance of the Whigs in the period of their supremacy.

On November 26, Mangum, who received the electoral vote of South Carolina for President, interpreting the elec-

tion as an endorsement of the doctrine of instructions, as indeed in part it was, and realizing that he had no hope of re-election, resigned from the United States senate. Judge Robert Strange of Fayetteville, a strong Democrat and a firm believer in the doctrine of instructions, was chosen for the unexpired term and, a few days later, for the new term. His majority was the party majority of one.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1836

The legislature of 1836 differed but little from its predecessors. Much of its time was spent in the consideration of small things, but a hopeful sign was the increasing interest manifested in the development of railroads. Not yet was the State prepared for a state system of internal improvements or even for state aid on any extended scale, but the interest manifested during the session in private ventures argued well for the future. Among its acts worthy of mention were those providing for the draining of the swamp lands of the State, the receipts from the sale of drained lands to be turned into the Literary Fund, and the appropriation of \$200,000 for the purpose; the acceptance by almost a unanimous vote of the surplus revenue of the United States Government; and the amendment of the Internal Improvement Fund act. The Raleigh and Columbia, the Norfolk and Edenton, and the North Carolina Central Railroad Companies were incorporated, and the charters of six other roads were amended to their advantage. Provision was made for the laying out of a state road from Franklin across the Nantahala Mountain to the Georgia line. The county of Davie was erected. Five judges, Owen Holmes, who did not accept, Richmond M. Pearson, Frederick Nash, John D. Toomer, and John L. Bailey, were chosen and a number of solicitors besides the regular state officers. In none of the elections is it possible to trace partisanship. In fact a considerable majority of the officers chosen were Whigs. Two elaborate series of resolutions, both introduced by Kenneth Rayner, failed to pass. One was a very strong pro-slavery argument addressed to Congress, while the other called for the distribution of the proceeds from the sale of public lands among the States proportionately. The latter was at this time the plan of Henry Clay and was very popular among North Carolina Whigs.

Governor Dudley was inaugurated on the first of January, 1837, and in his inaugural address made a strong plea for progress. The following is the highly significant part of his message in that it was the keynote of the Whig party at its best stage:

As a State, we stand fifth in population, first in climate, equal in soil, minerals and ores, with superior advantages for manufacturing and with a hardy, industrious and economical people. Yet, with such unequalled natural facilities, we are actually least in the scale of relative wealth and enterprise, and our condition daily becoming worse—lands depressed in price, fallow and deserted—manufacturing advantages unimproved—our store of mineral wealth undisturbed, and our colleges and schools languishing from neglect. It is a true but melancholy picture, and it is our business to prescribe the remedy. In the want of capital and of that generous confidence which should exist between Government and the people, mutually, to assist and support each other, I think I find the evil, and the corrective is palpable. Increase your circulating medium, give to industry and enterprise their proper incentives, and make interest the connecting tie between ourselves and our constituents and we at once seize hold of their confidence and affections and arrest the torrent of emigration which is desolating our State.

The year 1837 had little of political interest outside of the congressional campaign which, concerned, properly enough it is true, only with national affairs, excited genuine and widespread interest. It must not be supposed that the interest in national affairs indicated any unusually strong national feeling. States' Rights sentiment was powerful in North Carolina throughout the entire period from 1776 to 1860. The reasons for the fact have already been discussed and will cause further comment later.

The congressional elections were therefore hotly contested in most cases. The Whigs gained one seat only to lose it during the term of the next Congress through a change of opinion on the part of the member. William B. Shepard of Pasquotank, a Whig, was succeeded by Samuel T. Sawyer

of Chowan, and Jesse Speight of Greene, a Democrat, was defeated by Charles Shepard of Craven, who was a moderate Whig. These were the only changes made in the delegation.

With the congressional canvass completed, the politics-ridden State turned its attention to a discussion of suitable candidates for the presidency in 1840 and to incidental mention of possible and gubernatorial candidates in 1838. In the Whig camp there was little need for discussion, for the party was committed heart and soul to Henry Clay. But party lines were in a way very loosely drawn and so it was felt to be necessary to sing his praises in and out of season in order to draw the hesitant and the doubting to his standard. Practically no one else was mentioned at this time. All the Whig papers were enlisted in his behalf and they considered no one else. In the same way the Whigs took Governor Dudley's renomination for granted, and no other candidate was suggested.

In the Democratic ranks there was the same unity as to a presidential candidate. Van Buren's supremacy was undisputed and the only quarrel was with the opposition. So Clay and Webster were consistently accused of yielding on all points to the abolitionists, while Harrison was mentioned only to belittle him. For the governorship the Democrats had apparently no one to offer. In February, the *Standard*, stating that a considerable number of leading Democrats agreed with it, took the ground that the governorship ought not to be contested, declaring that if the office was to be put on a party basis, it would be "disturbing to the repose of the State." "If the official conduct of the executive officer of a State is unexceptionable, it certainly gives him claim to election. In the case of Governor Dudley, so far, no dissatisfaction has been given to the people of the State." Declaring that the question of abolition was the only issue, that therefore the State should be undivided, and that Dudley had never been a party governor, it continued: "It may be said that the opposition had no regard to the claims of Governor Spaight who had done nothing to provoke hostility.



True! but the conduct of the opposition can furnish no plea to Democratic Republicans for desertion of their principles. The time was (though we fear it has gone by) when the orthodox Democratic creed taught that in the selection of State officers we should ask what were their opinions of State matters; in choosing National officers, what do they hold on National affairs. That this has not continued to be the plan of selection may be attributed to the proscriptive spirit of the Federal party." In view of the facts of the case, this last assertion of the *Standard* is interesting, and yet, as will be seen, it is true that the Whig party in North Carolina first began to apply the spoils system to state affairs.

It is difficult now to understand just the reasons for the *Standard's* position as to Dudley. It is true that he had always been exceedingly popular and that he had grown more so during his term of office. In addition, the *Standard* had no one to offer in opposition and it later appeared that the editor at the time believed that Dudley would vote neither for Clay, Webster, nor Harrison, and that he was opposed to the re-establishment of the United States Bank. As Dudley was on record in believing that a protective tariff was unconstitutional, it can readily be seen that he was not an unattractive candidate as Whig candidates went. Here is probably the explanation of the *Standard's* action. However, that may be, the position taken was not popular with the rest of the Democratic press and criticism was very sharp from all quarters of the State.

In the meantime, Dudley had seriously considered refusing to be a candidate for re-election. He told John Branch, who was a warm personal friend, of his intention. Branch, who, although he had revolted against Jackson after the break-up of the cabinet and his own consequent retirement from the Navy Department, had now returned to his full Democratic allegiance, warned him against undue haste in making his decision; and Dudley later decided to be a candidate. In July, a group of Wake County Democrats met at the house of one of their number and nominated



Branch. He was informed of this action by a letter dated July 4, in which he was asked to define his opinion on the Independent Treasury and the Bank of the United States, and three days later he replied accepting the nomination. In his letter he declared that the immediate issue was that of the establishment of the bank, but that behind it lay the menace of a loose construction of the Constitution when the South could only be safe under a system of strict construction. "For Governor Dudley I entertain personally the highest respect and esteem and nothing could induce me to oppose his re-election, but the paramount consideration above alluded to." The Democratic press and leaders accepted his candidacy, but the *Standard*, in announcing its support of the nominee, declined to retract any of its former statements as to the campaign.

The Whigs immediately accused Branch of inducing Dudley to run only to contest his election himself. They also called attention to the fact that Branch had been recently nominated in Leon County, Florida, for membership in a constitutional convention which the people were trying to secure, and said that this was proof positive that he was a citizen of Florida and hence ineligible to office in North Carolina. They also used against him with some effect his famous speech in the legislature of 1834 which gave an inside account of the break-up of the cabinet, and in which he had expressed no flattering opinion of Van Buren.

John Branch was a native of Halifax County. Born in 1782, he graduated from the University in 1801 and studied law under Judge John Haywood. He was, however, possessed of great wealth by inheritance and never practiced his profession. In 1811 and from 1813 to 1817 he represented his county in the state Senate, being speaker in 1816 and 1817. In the latter year he was elected governor and served for the three terms, the maximum number under the constitution. He returned to the state Senate in 1822 for one term and in 1823 was elected United States senator to succeed Montford Stokes and was re-elected in 1829. In March,

1829, he resigned to become secretary of the navy under Jackson. Parton says of him: "Mr. Branch was not one of those who achieve greatness, nor one of those who have greatness thrust upon them. He was born to it. Inheriting an ample estate, he lived for many years upon his plantations and employed himself in superintending their culture. He was a man of respectable talents, good presence, and high social position." When the cabinet was broken up Jackson offered him the governorship of the territory of Florida, a position he was later to hold under President Tyler, but while Branch owned much property in Florida and the position might not have been uncongenial, he was in no mood to accept anything at the President's hand and peremptorily refused to consider any appointment. Returning to North Carolina, he was at once elected to Congress. He was in the legislature in 1834 and he was a member of the convention of 1835 and quite prominent in its activities. Such was the distinguished career of the Democratic candidate.

The campaign such as it was, for in the modern sense there can scarcely be said to have been any, was very dull with little to arouse interest. Also because Branch was not nominated until July, it was very short. Immediately after his nomination it was evident that a mistake had been made in bringing him out so late and there was really never any hope of his election. National discussion, as always, predominated and the United States Bank was the chief issue. The *Standard* now had a sub-motto: "The people against the Bank." Once more, too, nullification sentiments and sympathies were charged against political opponents. But a change was coming over some of the people. This is best indicated by the fact of the *Standard's* reprinting Calhoun's speeches in the Senate on various subjects and endorsing them. The abolition movement was making considerable headway by 1838 and the effects were easily visible in North Carolina. This question also entered into the campaign.

In spite of the dullness of the campaign, the press waxed

bitter. Parenthetically it may be said that there have been but few if any campaigns since when at least a part if not all of the press was not bitter. It has been a characteristic of North Carolina political campaigns. Speaking of the bitterness, the *Standard* said: "We have before us three of the leading Whig papers of North Carolina, published within a month in which collectively the terms loco foco, imposters, agrarians, senseless loafers, sluggish idlers, swaggering penniless braggarts are used as applicable to the Democratic Republican party." The charge was true and is particularly interesting in that it shows the tendency of the Whig party in North Carolina, in spite of the facts of its foundation and its geographical strength to become a party of the classes as distinguished from the masses.

The election came and Dudley carried forty-three counties with a majority of more than 14,000. The total Whig vote increased only 336 votes while the Democratic vote decreased 9,797. A Whig legislature was chosen with control of both houses and a majority on joint ballot of fourteen. Mangum—who had declined to be a candidate for Congress the year before, probably because he was afraid that Doctor Montgomery would defeat him, a fear not entirely unfounded,—was a candidate for the Senate from Orange, but was defeated, to the unholy joy of the Democrats who made special efforts to that end. Mangum said during the campaign with some truth: "The Van Buren party would rather see the devil unchained and put in the Legislature than to see me elected."

The Whigs, naturally were very jubilant, the *Register* expressing their feeling in the following editorial:

The keynote North Carolina has struck  
Of victory full and entire,  
In the "slough of despond" Locofoco is stuck  
As deep in the mud as the mire.

It is with feelings such as we have rarely experienced that we announce that North Carolina, too, has cast down her idols, and joined in the loud chorus of triumph and joy,



which commencing in Maine, has been now reverberated from almost every State in the Union. Yes, the Old North is now emphatically "redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled." After a fight of war to the knife and the knife to the hilt, victory has perched upon the Whig banner, under the glorious folds of which so many gallant States have taken shelter. Make way then for us and proclaim to the utmost verge of the Union that North Carolina has elected a Whig Governor! a Whig Senate!! and a Whig House of Commons!!!

The legislature met in November and the Whigs elected the officers. Andrew Joyner of Halifax, was chosen speaker of the Senate over Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe, and William A. Graham of Orange, speaker of the House over Michael Hoke of Lincoln. Governor Dudley's message contained bitter criticism of the protective tariff and also of the financial measures of Jackson's and Van Buren's administrations. It also strongly endorsed the re-establishment of the Bank of the United States and made a plea for the state banks. A large part of the message, which was unusually long for that day, was taken up with these matters. He suggested an entailed homestead, urged continuance and elaboration of the system of internal improvements, and urgently recommended the creation of a system of public schools. Struck with the lack of suitable and prepared teachers, he suggested the plan since adopted of providing free tuition at the University for those would agree to teach for a certain term of years.

In his inaugural which came later in the session, the Governor again urged public education and internal improvements. The address showed evidence of considerable party heat and rancor. Declaring that the stability of the State's institutions was threatened by the levelling spirit prevalent, he called upon the people to hold it in check. This part of the address excited considerable hostile comment, the *Standard* saying that it was "a political firebrand wantonly and gratuitously thrown into our councils at a time when



conciliatory language was of vast importance to the interests of the State."

Towards the close of the campaign, the Democrats quite frequently made the charge that the Whigs planned in the event of their controlling the legislature, to instruct the two Democratic senators, and thus force their resignation. No sooner was the result certain than it became evident that they had some such intention, and soon after the session opened, Kenneth Rayner of Hertford, introduced a series of resolutions designed to embarrass the senators. Declaring that a great crisis had arrived in the political history of the country, in which it was the duty of the people's representatives to express their opinions calmly and dispassionately, the resolutions condemned the passage of the expunging resolution, and called for a counter resolution by the Senate condemning that action; condemning the proposed sub-treasury scheme; and endorsing the distribution policy. The final resolution was the important one. It was as follows: "Resolved, That our Senators in Congress will represent the wishes of a large majority of the people of this State by voting to carry out the foregoing resolutions."

These resolutions had been the subject of prolonged Whig caucuses and were finally decided upon after advice was taken from practically every leading member of the party in the State. Their form was a matter of considerable importance and much care was taken in regard to it. In the long debate which followed upon their introduction, the whole purpose of the Democrats was to amend the resolutions so as at least to commit the Whigs to an endorsement of the principle of instruction; but all attempts at this were futile. The Whigs had the power and were determined to use it and, if possible, to drive Brown and Strange from the Senate; but they were unwilling to accept the doctrine of instructions. And so, by a strict party vote in each house, they defeated every amendment and passed the resolution. David S. Reid immediately moved a resolution endorsing the votes of the

two senators against certain abolitionist measures, but this was defeated by a party vote.

As soon as the senators received the resolutions, they wrote expressing the belief that the General Assembly was not exerting their undoubted right of instruction and expressing their readiness to obey or resign whenever instructions should be given, but asking for correction if their construction of the resolutions was at fault. This action put the Whigs in a difficult position, and they had no answer to give that would not commit them in a way that they did not wish. In the House the letter was laid on the table, but in the Senate the following resolution was adopted by a party vote:

Resolved, That the resolutions passed by the General Assembly, and transmitted to our Senators in Congress are sufficiently plain and intelligible to be comprehended by any one desirous of understanding them; that we believe this communication anticipating the reception of said resolutions, and making inquiry as to their meaning, is not in good faith; and that it would be incompatible with the self-respect of this General Assembly to make any reply to it.

On January 14, 1839, Senator Brown presented the resolutions to the Senate and defended his course and that of his colleague who joined him in the defense. They then announced their intention of presenting their resignations at the next legislature. Henry Clay took upon himself the defense of the North Carolina Whigs and answered them rather discourteously. Brown and Strange both replied to him so effectively as to delight the heart of every North Carolina Democrat and equally disgust that of every North Carolina Whig.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1840

The legislature of 1838 did not spend its entire time playing politics, though it must be confessed that the major portion of it was devoted to that dear delight of North Carolinians of the period. Constructive legislation of great importance was enacted, the most vital and significant act being the passage of the law providing for the establishment of the public school system. This went into effect at once and the first school established under its provisions opened its doors on January 20, 1840. Of great importance also were acts authorizing a State subscription of \$750,000 to the Fayetteville & Western Railroad Co., the endorsement by the State of bonds of the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad Co. to the amount of \$500,000, and the incorporation of the Weldon Railroad Company. Sectionalism was apparent among the Whigs in regard to internal improvement and it was exceedingly difficult for western Whigs to persuade those from the East to support all the projects contemplated, most of which were thought to be chiefly of importance to the West. To interest them, therefore, a resolution was passed directing the Board of Internal Improvements to employ an engineer to ascertain if an inlet could be opened at Nag's Head between Albemarle Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. Another resolution requested the State's delegation in Congress to use all efforts to secure the aid of the federal government in opening the inlet. The western members, be it said, speaking generally, did not care at all whether an inlet was opened or not. In the internal improvement legislation there was a clear line of demarcation between the Whigs and Democrats, although in no case was there absolute division along party lines. Generally speaking, however, Democrats were opposed and Whigs favorable to internal improvements.

Other acts of interest and importance were the erection of the counties of Cherokee and Henderson, the passage of

resolutions instructing the governor to obtain all possible information as to the number of insane in the State and to report plans for an asylum to the next legislature, and to secure information in regard to penitentiaries, orphanages, and reformatories. Among the private acts were those incorporating seven private schools, Davidson College and the Greensboro Female College. The name of the Literary and Manual Labor Institution in Wake County was changed to Wake Forest College. Four textile and two iron manufacturing companies were chartered. These acts all show awakening interest in matters that were vital to the highest degree and they were hopeful signs.

Politics never grew quiet in North Carolina during 1839. The Rayner resolutions and the failure of the two senators to regard them furnished material for mutual recrimination until the congressional campaign was well under way. The Whigs, as soon as the legislature adjourned, declared that the Democrats had refused to obey instructions and thus in a sense at last they endorsed the doctrine. The Democratic members of the legislature held a meeting in January with Weldon N. Edwards as chairman and issued an address to the people defending the senators and attacking the Whigs for their behavior. In the same address they condemned the Rayner resolutions and the suggestion to establish a national bank. A more important and significant part of the address was the call for the appointment of a central committee of the party to receive nominations for governor in 1840 and in case a demand for a state convention was at all general to call one. The demand was already strong and this section made the call certain.

The congressional elections occupied the usual time and attracted the usual interest. Nominations were made by both parties in every district except the twelfth where James Graham, the sitting Whig member, had no opposition. The contests were very bitter in most instances and, somewhat to the surprise of all the State, resulted in a substantial gain for the Democrats, eight of their candidates being successful.



They were: J. A. Bynum, J. J. McKay, M. T. Hawkins, William Montgomery, Henry W. Connor, all of whom were old members, John Hill—who defeated for one term Augustine H. Shepperd—Charles Fisher and Charles Shepard. The last mentioned had left the Whig party the fall before while in Congress and was now triumphantly endorsed by his district in spite of the activity of the Whigs who spared no efforts to defeat and thus rebuke him. S. T. Sawyer, who had done the same thing, was defeated by Kenneth Rayner who was now regarded as one of the most important of the Whig leaders in the State. The other Whig members chosen were Lewis Williams, who could not be defeated, James Graham, Edmund Deberry, all old members, and Edward Stanly who now entered upon a brilliant but violent and erratic career in Congress. Just before the election the *Raleigh Register* published a forged letter from Doctor Montgomery to a fellow Democrat. The letter was one calculated to injure Montgomery greatly, but it attracted more attention after the election than it did before, and it was comparatively easy then to prove the spurious nature of the document to the satisfaction of all except the *Register*. It need hardly be said that it was the cause of much vituperative language.

In the campaign the Democrats began the selection of "Committees of Vigilance," forerunners of the later local organizations of both parties. Each party already had central committees, and the way was now ready for the important democratic step—the creation of the state conventions. All summer the idea grew in favor not only with the Democrats but with the Whigs, and, consequently in August the Whigs and in October the Democrats issued calls for conventions, the Whigs to meet on November 12, 1839, and the Democrats on January 8, 1840. At once there followed for each party a series of county meetings designed not only to elect delegates but to arouse the people and secure some expression of opinion as to gubernatorial candidates.

Little difference of opinion could be discovered among the Whigs; the leaders had already seen to that. During the

legislature of 1838-1839 the Whig members in secret caucus had settled upon John M. Morehead, of Guilford, as the proper person to run, and their quiet work in his behalf settled the question. Nearly every county meeting that condescended to a discussion of state affairs endorsed him, Guilford leading the way in August. William J. Alexander of Mecklenburg was the only other man mentioned.

Among the Democrats there was no such unanimity of opinion and preference. William H. Haywood, Romulus M. Saunders, Weldon N. Edwards, Louis D. Henry, Bedford Brown, Henry W. Connor, William D. Moseley, and William A. Blount were all endorsed by one or more county meetings, but it soon became evident that a large majority of the party favored Haywood. About twenty counties endorsed him formally, but in November he announced that under no circumstances could he be a candidate. There was still some hope that he would reconsider, and the matter was not regarded as settled and a number of counties endorsed him afterwards. Saunders was a second choice and one far behind in popularity.

The Whig convention, the first state political convention in the history of North Carolina, met in Raleigh on November 12. Thirty-four counties were represented by 91 delegates. James Mebane of Orange, called the meeting to order and ex-Governor John Owen was chosen president. A committee of thirteen, one from each congressional district, was appointed to report the business of the body. Morehead was nominated for governor and Clay and Talmadge were endorsed as candidates for President and Vice President. James Mebane and John Owen were selected as delegates at-large to the national convention. The platform of the party was in substance as follows: It favored: (1) economy in government; (2) reform in the revenue system; (3) reduction in the number of government employees; (4) selection of government employees "without discrimination of parties;" (5) an amendment to the Federal Constitution to abolish the electoral college; (6) One term of four years for the Presi-

dent; (7) A National bank; (8) A division of the proceeds of the public lands among the States on a basis of Federal population; (9) Public education; (10) Strict construction of the Constitution. It opposed: (1) Jackson's spoils system; (2) Appointments of members of Congress to Federal offices during their terms in Congress; (3) Making judicial appointments for partisan reasons; (4) Interference of Federal officers in elections; (5) Protective tariff; (6) The Federal Government's making internal improvements "except such as may be stamp'd with a National character;" (7) The Sub-Treasury scheme; (8) Federal interference with slavery.

John Motley Morehead, the Whig candidate for governor, was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, July 4, 1796. Two years later his parents moved to Rockingham County, North Carolina, where he lived until his marriage in 1821. His early education was received at Doctor Caldwell's famous academy and in 1815 he entered the junior class of the University of North Carolina where he graduated in 1817. Upon leaving the University he began the study of law under Judge Murphey. Here he received the inspiration of his foremost later achievements, for Murphey's influence upon him was very great and he not only received instruction in law from his teacher but acquired the dominating idea of his later career. Murphey, too, was fortunate. Himself an idealist, he had powerfully proclaimed a theory as well as outlined a plan of action in respect both to the education and internal improvements. But practical men, political leaders of a different sort and at the head of an organized party were needed to bring about success in putting his ideas into actual execution. Bartlett Yancey and later Calvin H. Wiley did this work in education; it was Morehead's privilege to have Murphey light his torch for leadership in internal improvements. He was admitted to the bar in 1819 and began practice at Wentworth. In 1821 he was a member of the House of Commons from Rockingham and, after his removal to Guilford he represented that county in the House in 1826 and 1827. He also was a delegate to the convention of 1835.

He had been a strong Jackson man and was a Jackson elector in 1832. He was eminently progressive and had a consistent record of interest and activity in behalf of education and internal improvements. He was not only a most successful lawyer, but was a man of affairs in the large meaning of the term.

Physically, Morehead was a fine specimen of a man. He was tall and broad-shouldered, well proportioned and erect, with a clean shaven and massive, yet fine, and highly intellectual face. He was possessed of an iron constitution and was given to hard work. He had a most cordial and delightful manner which carried with it an assurance of candor and sincerity and which never left him whether on the stump or in personal conversation. He was a rather jocular man, but seems not to have possessed any great fund of real wit or humor. Of sterling integrity, he made a strong candidate.

It was understood before the convention that Morehead would canvass the State, and he at once agreed to do so. His letter of acceptance was characteristic of the time and place. All of it was devoted to national affairs in respect to which he was entirely in accord with the Whig doctrines.

The Democratic convention met in Raleigh, January 8, 1840, and remained in session two days. Thirty-eight counties, eleven of which were from the West, had representatives present. The most extreme western counties represented were: Ashe, Stokes, Iredell, and Burke. Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe, presided. A committee of twenty-six, two from each congressional district, was appointed to recommend measures and candidates, and a committee of thirteen to draw up an address to the people. The platform as finally adopted endorsed Van Buren, the independent treasury plan, and strict construction of the constitution; it denounced a national bank and the abolition movement. Weldon N. Edwards and Louis D. Henry were chosen delegates at-large to the national Democratic convention, and the appointment of district delegates was recommended. Judge Romulus M. Saunders was unanimously nominated for governor. He



was at the time on the Superior bench, but he at once resigned. He was called into the convention and addressed it. His letter of acceptance, like Morehead's, was devoted to national affairs, but he declared for public education and internal improvements if the two policies could be carried out without the State's going into debt, the last being a very safe qualification.

Romulus Mitchell Saunders was born in Caswell County in 1791. He received his preparation for college in that county and was a student at the University for two years, but was dismissed for some infraction of the strict code of rules then prevailing. He studied law in Tennessee under Judge Hugh L. White and was admitted to the bar of that State in 1812. The next year he came home and in 1815, in company with Bedford Brown, was elected to the House of Commons. The next year he was in the Senate, but returned to the House in 1818, 1819 and 1820, being speaker for the last two terms. In 1820 he was elected to Congress and served there three terms. During this period he was the intimate friend of Macon and Yancey. In 1824 he favored Calhoun for the presidency as long as the South Carolinian was a potential factor in the contest, after which he leaned to Crawford for whom he finally voted in the House of Representatives. Unlike the majority of North Carolina politicians who favored Crawford and opposed Jackson—and Saunders opposed him violently—he did not become a Whig, but saw the light and in 1828 was a strong supporter of the Old Hero over John Quincy Adams. In 1828 he was chosen attorney-general of the State and held the office until 1833 when he resigned to accept from Jackson the appointment as commissioner on the French Spoliation Claims where he served with Judge Campbell of Tennessee, and Judge Kane of Pennsylvania, and made a considerable reputation for ability. In 1835 he was chosen a judge of the Superior Court. Saunders probably held more offices than any man in the history of the State and there was never a more assiduous office-seeker. His letters are full of his desire for

this office or that; for even when he was in office, he would devote much thought and anxiety to finding something better to try for. It was this propensity of his which gave Judge Badger the opportunity to say in 1853 when someone asked him who would succeed Bishop Ives of the Episcopal Church who had just joined the Roman Catholic Church, "I do not know, but Judge Saunders will undoubtedly be a candidate for the place."

Saunders was an experienced and able politician and campaigner, in no sense a statesman, but a man of genuine ability and of keen intellect, really of power far above the average, of fine presence, and of strong common sense. He was probably as strong a man as his party could have nominated with the one possible exception of William H. Haywood, and it is doubtful if the latter would have done as well on the stump as Saunders.

The campaign was formally opened in March when both candidates spoke at Orange Court. Hillsboro was an important political center at that time and the entire State watched with interest for reports of the debate. Each side claimed that its candidate had utterly demolished the other, and it is difficult at this distance to know the truth save that neither was demolished. But the evidence seems to indicate that Saunders had rather the best of it on account of his greater dexterity and fuller information due to his larger experience in such work. He held this advantage for some time, but Morehead was learning the game and the majority of the people were already with him, a fact of more importance than ability in debate. But there was never a time when he was able to put Saunders to rout. Joint debates were held in a large number of places well distributed about the State, and, in addition, each candidate carried out an extended program of speeches lasting from early March until the election in August. As examples, Saunders, between April 25 and May 22, spoke at Stantonsburg, Plymouth, and in Beaufort, Tyrrell, Pitt, Hertford, Bertie, Gates, Martin, Northampton, Halifax, Granville, and Wake counties. In

some of these he held several meetings. Morehead between April 23 and May 22 spoke in New Bern, Washington, Halifax, Jackson, Edenton, Hertford, Elizabeth City, Camden court house, Currituck court house, Windsor, Williamston, Louisburg, Oxford and Raleigh. Throughout the State, in East and West, both traveled, meeting the people and discussing national issues.

The relations between the candidates were good throughout, though each made charges against each other of abolition sympathy, of federalism, of nullification sentiment, and of other things too numerous and too absurd to chronicle. Neither attempted oratory, but when arguments were attempted, appealed to common sense. Unfortunately real arguments were not common. Neither of them was a demagogue, and yet each resorted to the tricks and manners of one. The story is familiar of how Saunders challenged Morehead, saying, "Whar, sir, does the gentleman git his authority for that thar statement? I ask him whar?" to be answered by Morehead's seizing two books and holding them with the words, "In them thar dokuments, sir. That's whar." Morehead devoted much of his time to denunciation of the extravagance of the Democratic national administration, an argument of greater weight nowhere than in North Carolina. He rang the changes on this, condemning the administration for furnishing the White House, for improving its grounds, for furnishing soap and towels to the government employes, and for using so much ice. He demanded of Saunders the reason for the last mentioned "extravagance," and, when the latter replied that Washington wells were bad, that cisterns had to be used, making ice a necessity, said with emphasis that the government might as well pay for the bread and meat for the clerks as to furnish them with water. These are characteristic examples of the methods of the candidates.

The campaign and campaign arguments were not confined to the gubernatorial candidates. The press was actively engaged. Every politician was hard at work and nearly every voter was in this year at least a politician. Bitter



charges of every sort were bandied back and forth. The Democrats urged against Morehead his friendship for the negroes and his opposition to the disfranchisement of the free negroes by the convention of 1835 as evidence that he favored abolition. The Whigs retorted that Saunders, while in Congress, had presented memorials to Congress in 1824 and 1825 from the North Carolina Manumission Society, a clear proof, so they said, that he was a full-fledged abolitionist. Saunders at once declared that times had changed because of the rise of the abolition movement in the North. He avowed himself not only an opponent of abolition but even of emancipation unless the freedmen were compelled without exception to leave the State. Saunders was right when he said that times had changed. The abolition movement was having a marked political effect as is shown by the constant reference to the question by both parties. It was probably the favorite argument against both Van Buren and Harrison. The dismissal of Lieutenant Hooe from the navy by a court martial on the evidence of two negroes produced a storm of protest from North Carolina Whigs and put the Democrats much on the defensive with no arguments that the people generally would accept.

Naturally the panic exerted a strong influence and hard times bred a discontent with the party in power which was hard to allay. The Democrats had difficulty in meeting the arguments of their opponents on this point. Many Democrats were favorable to the Whig policy of distributing the proceeds from the sale of the public lands among the States, and this lessened Democratic strength. The Democrats, contrary to the usual impression, manifested little apathy. It is true that they did not deem a Whig victory in the nation within the range of possibility, but they were on their mettle in spite of the fact that from the beginning they fought a losing fight and probably knew it. They attacked internal improvements, or rather the method and manner in which they were promoted, which they declared extravagant, wasteful, and ineffective; but the majority of the people wanted internal



improvements. Again the Democrats accused Dudley of bad faith and of lending the money of the State to Whigs to the entire exclusion of the Democrats, but no one paid much attention to the charges. One thing forced them to be somewhat broader than the Whigs,—they were under the necessity of conciliating the West.

The Whig arguments, many of them absurd in the extreme, were received with hearty approval and applause by the party which was in a mood to care nothing for truth, consistency, common sense, or logic, if only the Democracy was sharply attacked. Charles Manly, in a joint debate with Saunders, made three charges against Van Buren—in the eyes of the Whigs final and damning: 1, With riding in a splendid carriage drawn by four horses; 2, with sending to the postoffice for his mail instead of walking to get it himself; and 3, with wearing silk stockings. No words can express the sanctimonious horror with which the Whigs received these conclusive proofs of Van Buren's unfitness for re-election. A new method had entered politics, controlling it entirely, and the Democrats, to their honor be it said, were not prepared for it.

Both parties had central committees answering to the executive committees of later days. These were both very active, but that of the Whigs was more fertile in expedients as well as more efficient in organization. The first work they accomplished was to perfect a most elaborate county organization which included a committee in every precinct, all working together. Hundreds of meetings were held by each party, but the Whigs suddenly began a series of young men's meetings which greatly disquieted and disgusted the Democrats who found themselves seriously handicapped by the charge that a young man had no chance in their organization. Then, too, the use of emblems, of campaign songs and cries, the perpetual series of processions, barbecues, and meetings, the systematic appeal through noise and excitement to emotion, to passion, and to prejudice, bewildered the Democrats who regarded it all as sheer demagoguery of the worst type,

—as indeed most of it was,—and doubtless were chagrined at their inability to meet like with like. There is much that was bad about it all, but no student of the period can fail to see that at its worst it was better than the apathy and localism which had formerly prevailed. All of it is significant in that it marked the growth of a new sort of democracy which was at least interested. The student also is forced to wonder if the men in North Carolina did much that summer and autumn besides attending political meetings. The Whigs made much of the log cabin argument, and it was a poor sort of community from the Whig standpoint that did not have some sort of representation of a log cabin. In Raleigh a huge log cabin was erected which was called Harrison Hall. It served as an assembly hall for the semi-weekly meetings of the Tippecanoe Club, all of which partook of the nature of celebrations. The disgust of the Democrats knew no bounds and they at once charged that the lumber used was state property, a charge which, it is needless to say, was false.

On June 30, Bedford Brown and Robert Strange carried out their pledge and sent to Governor Dudley their resignations from the United States Senate, to take effect upon the meeting of the next legislature. Both declared that they could not regard the Rayner resolutions as instructions, but said that they wanted the endorsement of the people. This action spurred both sides to renewed efforts in the contest.

Both Whigs and Democrats had taken great interest in the national conventions of their parties. John Owen was quite a prominent member of the Harrisburg convention though he was not, as is usually stated, president of that body. He was urged to take the nomination for Vice President and could have had it; but he declined and by this narrow margin lost the presidency. Mangum was a receptive candidate for the nomination, but Tyler was regarded by the convention as a better sop to the Clay Whigs and was chosen. North Carolina Whigs were bitterly disappointed at Clay's

failure to receive the nomination for President, but they accepted Harrison and soon warmed to him.

At the Democratic convention, which met in Baltimore in 1840, Weldon N. Edwards was a prominent figure, being a vice-president, on the committee to prepare the address to the country, and on the nominating committee. The Democratic convention did not nominate a candidate for Vice President and the question was referred to the States. Therefore in June the Democratic central committee called a state convention to meet in Raleigh on July 9. Henry Fitts of Warren, presided over the meeting at which twenty-nine counties, mostly in the east, were represented. There was much sentiment for James K. Polk of Tennessee, in the State, but R. M. Johnson seemed for every reason a more available candidate and received the endorsement of the convention. The meeting was utilized to urge Democratic activity.

Two meetings were important for the Whigs. In June a great demonstration in Wilmington celebrated the putting into operation of the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad. Morehead and Dudley were prominent among the speakers of the meeting and the Whigs generally used the occasion to emphasize their devotion to the cause of internal improvements. In the same month the railroad and the completion of the new Capitol were magnificently celebrated in Raleigh, and a second and like opportunity was thus given for the dissemination of Whig doctrines.

In July a great Whig meeting was held at Salisbury for Rowan and fifteen neighboring counties. The presence of two soldiers of the Revolution was a feature of the occasion. Speeches, processions, banquets, log cabins, coon skins and live coons, and hard cider all united to make the day truly characteristic.

The election which came in August only intensified party enthusiasm. The early returns indicated Democratic success, but in a short time the completeness of the Whig victory was apparent. Morehead carried forty-one counties



out of the sixty-six then existent and his popular majority was 8,581. Twenty-two of the counties were in the East and this is indicative of the fact that the Whig party was outgrowing the sectionalism which had been occasioned by the peculiar conditions of its origin in North Carolina. Of the western counties the Democrats carried only Ashe, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rockingham, Stokes, and Yancey. A Whig legislature was chosen at the same time.

Although defeated the Democrats did not slacken their efforts. Saunders did not at all lessen his activity and remained on the stump until November as did Bedford Brown, Louis D. Henry, and others. The Democratic papers became more active, addresses were issued urging interest and hard work, and the charges against opponents were doubled and redoubled. The Whigs felt that their cause was safe, but they determined not to be deceived as they had been in 1836. So every effort was put forth. To revive all possible drooping interest a Whig convention was summoned to meet in Raleigh on October 5. It was a scene of wild enthusiasm. Judge Gaston's "Carolina" was sung for the first time in public and the words were then published for the first time. A letter was read from Henry Clay in which he declared the contest to be between the President and the people, between arbitrary power and constitutional liberty. John Owen presided and ten of the most prominent Whigs of the State made speeches, including George E. Badger, Edward Stanly, D. M. Barringer, Kenneth Rayner, Lewis Williams, and Rev. Josiah Crudup. The sensation of the meeting was Badger's speech. He had been exceedingly active in the campaign and was regarded as the greatest power of the party in the State. His speech, which was printed in pamphlet form and given wide circulation, was a powerful effort. Interestingly enough, he dictated it, while walking up and down in his office, and it was transcribed by Henry W. Miller. It had great effect and did much to bring him the high honor he presently received.

A word as to the previous career of Badger is in order



since with this campaign he assumed a leading position in North Carolina politics. Born in New Bern in 1796 he was there prepared for college. He was a student at Yale for two years, but his means failed and he returned home and commenced the study of law under John Stanly. At the age of nineteen years he was admitted to the bar and almost immediately he was appointed solicitor for his district. In 1816 he was a member of the House of Commons from Newbern. While there he formed the acquaintance of Thomas Ruffin, then speaker of the House and a strong friendship developing between the two, Ruffin, who had just been elevated to the bench, asked Badger to go to Hillsboro and take his practice. Badger consenting, moved to Hillsboro and lived there for several years, removing later to Warrenton, the former home of his wife. In 1820 he was elected to the Superior bench and served for five years, retiring at the end of that time to Raleigh where he again began the practice of law. In politics Badger was by inheritance and temperament a Federalist, and while in 1828 he was a strong supporter of Jackson and was commonly supposed to be slated for the position of attorney-general in the latter's cabinet, he broke with him by 1832 and in 1836 was a Whig leader. Badger was pre-eminently a lawyer and there he attained his greatest reputation, but he was a logical and powerful speaker, and of great power in political campaigns. Personally he was with his intimates a genial, humorous man, noted for his charm in conversation and for his inexhaustible fund of anecdotes. He was in strong contrast to Graham who was always severely grave and formal and who possessed great dignity and impressiveness of manner. Unlike as the two were in manner, it is most likely that they differed little, if at all, in their inner attitude towards the mass of the people.

Returning to the convention, it issued a declaration of principles in which the following appeared: "We declare the leaders of the Party in Power unworthy the confidence of a free people because they have violated every pledge they have given to the Nation." That party in power was attacked

for extravagance, currency evils, the spoils system, opposition to the will of the people, the destruction of the bank and the substitution of the sub-treasury scheme, the scarcity of specie and the issue of treasury drafts, and the increase of the officers of the army and navy. Harrison was endorsed as a distinguished statesman who was the foe of all evil, corruption, and usurpation of power, and "because in his character and services he more nearly than any man now living approaches to the Father of his Country, the illustrious Washington."

A ripple of excitement was caused during the presidential campaign when William Montgomery and M. T. Hawkins, two Democratic members of Congress, issued from Washington a circular against Harrison. Immediately Stanly, Lewis Williams, Rayner, and Deberry replied defending Harrison. Stanly also wrote a reply addressed to the people of his district as did James Graham. Harrison was spared no charge that might injure him. If one might believe the Democratic papers he was not only the climax of incapacity and inefficiency, but also a man guilty of every possible cruelty and wrong.

The election resulted in the choice of Harrison electors by a popular majority of 13,141. He carried forty-five counties.

Several interesting things became apparent in the campaign, first and most important of which was the marked effect which abolition agitation in the North was having upon the minds of the people of North Carolina. The second is the existence among the Whigs of a line of cleavage between what were known as "Federal" Whigs and "Republican" Whigs. The factions could unite perfectly against the common enemy, but they had no undying love for each other. The factions thus formed and thus apparent remained in existence as long as the Whig party was alive in North Carolina.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LEGISLATURE OF 1840 AND THE CAMPAIGN OF 1841

The legislature of 1840 organized by electing Andrew Joyner of Halifax, speaker of the Senate over Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe, and William A. Graham speaker of the House of Commons without opposition. The Whigs had a safe majority in the Senate and a very large one in the House and thus felt able to carry through any program which might be determined upon.

Governor Dudley's message was an elaborate review of national political history for the past twelve years, particular attention being paid, however, to the questions of the bank and the sub-treasury. In closing this portion of his message, he congratulated the State on the sweeping Whig victory. He also congratulated the people on the completion of two railroads, and made an elaborate plea for and defense of railroads. In connection with works of improvement in general he announced that the survey of the Nag's Head project had been successful. He expressed the belief that the State was too poor to carry out at the time all the schemes of internal improvement planned, but urged that work be carried on consistently and not be stopped. He recommended that the legislature take some steps for the relief of the unfortunate and the criminal, suggesting the establishment of asylums and a penitentiary. Calling attention to the influence of sectionalism in the selection of judges, he recommended the adoption of the district system. On the whole, the message was an exceedingly able document.

The message, however able, made small impression at the time upon the Whigs in the legislature. Their minds were set on politics, not on statecraft. The election of two United States senators to them seemed to outweigh every other consideration and their whole attention was directed to it to the exclusion of everything else. It was the same story that has been a familiar one ever since. The majority of the mem-



bers of the legislature have been selected in at least two out of every three elections—with the feeling then excited controlling the third—not on the basis of what they proposed to do or were capable of doing for the State, but on account of their preference for United States senator. Not the least of the benefits of the popular election of senators is the removal of this obstacle to the efficiency of state legislatures.

Nine names were before the legislature for choice. The division already mentioned as existing among the Whigs now became very prominent. The Federal Whigs had as favorites for the two places Gaston, Badger, Williams, Caldwell, and Graham, while the Republican Whigs supported Mangum, William B. Shepard, John Owen and Governor Dudley. Feeling was very strong between the two wings, but never strong enough to threaten seriously any lack of united action. The lines of division are not always entirely clear to us to-day. In a sense the names indicate the prevailing views of each faction. So far as definite action was demanded, the Federal Whigs wished support of the United States Bank made a test, while the Republican Whigs thought the senators should be left free to act as occasion seemed to demand.

The method of securing party unity was a caucus. North Carolina Whigs had been in the habit of denouncing the caucus and the convention, but, as in 1840, they had adopted a convention, they now definitely adopted the caucus as the machine to secure party regularity. The legislature had scarcely assembled before one was called. It was not easy even for the caucus to concile all the differences in the party. One name was immediately eliminated. William Gaston's election had been suggested without his being consulted and early in November he wrote to a friend declining the use of his name. His chief reason was his disinclination to leave the bench. He could have been elected without difficulty so great was his popularity and his deserved reputation for ability. The Democrats were of course supporting Brown and Strange, but of the Whigs it is likely that they preferred Dudley and Shepard. After much discussion, a great deal



of it acrimonious, and many meetings, the caucus through a compromise between the two factions settled on Mangum for the long term and on Graham for the short one, and they were elected, Mangum receiving 99 votes to Brown's 65, Graham 98 to Strange's 64. Badger, who was thus passed over, was recommended by the caucus to President Harrison for the position of attorney-general in his cabinet.

The elections were generally accepted, but bitter criticism was heard from the Whigs in a number of quarters, particularly in regard to the selection of Graham, who was not at all well known and who was of comparatively limited experience. This feeling was particularly noticeable in the East, where the choice of both senators from Orange was very unpopular. They conceded Mangum's claims for a place though they had small love for him or confidence in his consistency or in his motives, but they were unable to accept with calmness or silence the election of Graham. Mangum himself was not without enemies and opponents. The *Register* was bitterly opposed to his selection and Badger, apart from any personal interest, was also opposed. Mangum's career had indeed been rather inconsistent. Its general outlines have already been indicated, but it is interesting to note in addition his record on various public questions. He voted against the recharter of the Bank in 1832 and against the distribution of public land receipts. He was at this time opposed to a protective tariff and to internal improvements by the national government. He had been on both sides of the bank question. The following authorized statement of his political views in 1838, in fact one written at his own request, is interesting:

Willie P. Mangum says he never voted for a bank in his life, neither State nor Federal. He further says he never voted to appropriate a cent in his life in favor of Internal Improvements by the General Government without the District of Columbia. He further says that he never voted in favor of a tariff of protection but did and said everything in his power to defeat every measure of that description. He

further says that he has uniformly voted in favor of economical appropriations and has strongly disapproved of the increase of expenditures to upwards of \$38,000,000, at one or two years and the general increase at all times for the last four or five years by the general Government. That he professes and hopes that he has acted uniformly upon the principles of strict construction of '98 and '99, and that he never consented to be harnessed by any party so as to deviate from the above principles. And he defies any documentary proof in contradiction of any of the essential principles contained in the above. Mr. Mangum further says that he is decidedly opposed to the present Administration, believing that the head of the Government and many of his friends have violated the most if not all the essential principles contained in the above.

The Democratic view was somewhat different. The *Standard* in June, 1842, said:

Mr. Mangum has been Federal and anti-Federal; Jackson and anti-Jackson; Calhoun and anti-Calhoun; Clay and anti-Clay; Nullifier and anti-Nullifier; Bank and anti-Bank; Land Distribution and anti-Land Distribution; Bankrupt Law and anti-Bankrupt Law; Internal Improvements and anti-Internal Improvements; Instructionist and anti-Instructionist. In a word there is hardly a respectable politician of the State old enough to have been associated with him ten years or more, who cannot remember the period when Mr. Mangum has been upon his side and upon the other also.

Both Graham and Mangum were in the legislature, the latter as senator. Both resigned at once. Graham's resignation made necessary the election of a new speaker and Robert B. Gilliam of Granville, was chosen over ten Democrats, only one of whom, Michael Hoke of Lincoln, received more than five votes.

The election of senators effected, the majority turned to the disposition of the other offices. The party was deeply infected with the spoils doctrine though they had denounced it unsparingly in national affairs and were still doing so. The Democrats, while approving the system in the national

government, along with the rest of the Jackson administrative policies, had never adopted it in the State. Upon the Whigs, largely, rests the responsibility for its introduction. In 1834 a Democratic House of Commons elected an opposition speaker and the legislature, Democratic on joint ballot, re-elected Swain, a Whig governor, and Hill, a Whig secretary of state. The treasurer resigned and a Whig was chosen. In the case of the lesser offices no party distinction was made. In 1835 the Whig secretary and comptroller were re-elected by a Democratic legislature and Whigs were also chosen to most of the lesser offices and positions. In 1836, when the Whigs came into power in the Senate, they defeated Moseley for speaker on account of party. With the rise of party government this was entirely proper and it is only mentioned to show the tendency of the Whigs to make party affiliation the test of qualification. The Democrats at the same session had a majority on joint ballot and re-elected the Whig secretary, filled a vacancy in the comptroller's office with a Whig, elected four Whig judges—all that were chosen—and two Whig solicitors out of three elected. In 1838 the Whigs elected both speakers and all the clerks but two. The secretary of state, the comptroller, and all seven councillors were Whigs. The treasurer resigned and a Whig was elected to the vacancy. Of the seven Superior Court judges at the time five were Whigs, and of the six solicitors five were Whigs; the attorney general was a Democrat.

At this session Hill was unanimously re-elected secretary of state and W. F. Collins, the Whig comptroller, was also re-elected. In the election of solicitors, David Outlaw, a Whig, was chosen in the first district over Asa Biggs, a Democrat; in the sixth, Hamilton C. Jones, a Whig, was chosen over Bartlett Shipp and J. R. Dodge, the incumbent, both of whom were Whigs; in the seventh, James W. Guinn, the Democratic incumbent, was replaced by John Gray Bynum, a Whig. J. R. J. Daniel, the Democratic attorney general, was defeated by Hugh McQueen, a Whig. Two judges were chosen, William H. Battle, a Whig, being elected over Romulus

M. Saunders to succeed Judge Toomer, and M. E. Manly, another Whig, was elected over Edward Hall to succeed Judge Saunders. The Whigs in the summer campaign had declared that Saunders ought not to be elected governor if for no other reason than that he had been nominated while on the bench. They were determined now to prevent his return. The Council of State was divided between the parties.

The work of the legislature in connection with internal improvements is particularly interesting. To assist the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad, its bonds to the amount of \$300,000 were endorsed in return for a mortgage on the road. It will be remembered that in 1836 the legislature had authorized the Board of Internal Improvements to take three-fifths of the stock of the road. The position of the parties in these two legislatures on the questions alluded to is of interest as an indication of the general situation.

1836		
SENATE		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>
Whigs .....	17	5
Democrats .....	9	8

HOUSE		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>
Whigs .....	41	9
Democrats .....	20	23

1840		
SENATE		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>
Whigs .....	21	3
Democrats .....	2	16

HOUSE		
	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Nays</i>
Whigs .....	51	16
Democrats .....	4	34

Following out the precedent set in 1839 and to aid immediately the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, which in January, 1841, suspended operations, the legislature heeded a



special message of Governor Morehead recommending action and endorsed its bonds to the amount of \$300,000. For the sake of securing the State against loss, it was provided that the road should give a mortgage and that the stockholders personally should also give a bond of half a million dollars. It was also provided that no dividends should be paid until the road was out of debt. The road was authorized to charge up to ten cents a mile. Even the Democratic press favored the relief of the Raleigh and Gaston which was regarded as highly important. State aid was extended to a turnpike from Rutherford County to Buncombe County. The usual resolution was passed asking federal aid in opening Roanoke Inlet near Nag's Head. This was done amid the jeers of the Democrats who professed—and rightly so—to see in it nothing but buncombe of the purest ray. Sectional feeling was very strong among the Whigs and particularly so after the election of senators. William B. Shepard, who had declined to return to Congress in order to go to the legislature and work for the interests of the East, and particularly for the reopening of the inlet, which was the pet scheme of the northeastern section of the State, attacked the Whigs in a sharp speech for considering the West alone. He declared that when in power they were not to be distinguished from Democrats and he intimated that their promises were not at all to be relied on. His speech was not at all welcome to the Whigs and those from the West resented it openly and bitterly. Their champion was Thomas L. Clingman, now entering upon a career of unusual interest and importance. He proceeded to read Shepard out of the party, declaring that the latter was only piqued because he had failed of election to the United States Senate and that his charges were false. True to his cult, one which he shared with the other politicians, he charged that Shepard was attacking the great Whig party for selfish reasons. Shepard's reply was very able and exceedingly caustic. In answer to the last charge, he said: "Artful and cunning men always sound the tocsin of party, when they wish, for a selfish purpose to impose upon others; 'The

party is in danger' has been the cry ever since the birth of the Albany Regency, of hypocrisy and meanness."

Other interesting doings of the legislature were the appropriation of \$3,000 to repair and refurnish the governor's mansion, notable only for the criticism it later excited, the loan of \$10,000 to help Wake Forest College, the incorporation of five academies, eight turnpikes and six manufacturing plants. The effect of the anti-slavery propaganda was to be seen in several laws lessening the rights of slaves and free negroes. The State Library was re-established, a new and improved school law was passed, and three new counties, Cleveland, Caldwell and Stanley, were established. Elections in the State for the first time were made uniform as to time. A strong series of resolutions condemning any use of the public lands save their sale and the distribution of the proceeds among the States was passed after considerable debate. The delegation in Congress was requested to urge this view and a Democratic amendment substituting the word "instruct" for "request" was defeated by a strict party vote. The Democrats took much comfort in thus putting the Whigs on record in opposition to the right of instruction—as if there was need of putting them more on record than they already were—saying that the Whigs were denying a right in which all North Carolinians believed. This was of course far from true, but it was so far true that the Whigs were afraid to stand on such ground, and they replied that they had not denied the right of instruction, but were only unanimously voting down factious opposition. Many North Carolina Whigs believed in instructions and the party dared not make the issue.

As a matter of fact the Whigs could not afford to make many clear cut tests of principle. The component elements of the party were too heterogeneous and there were too many shades of opinion included. This was of course the great weakness of the party both in State and Nation. In the campaign of 1840 they had called themselves Democratic Whigs, Democratic Republican Whigs, and even Democrats. As

soon as the election was won they began to say that they were the Democrats because "the majority are necessarily the Democrats."

The legislature ignored one proposal which was destined to be heard from again. Green W. Caldwell of Mecklenburg introduced a bill for a constitutional amendment which would remove the freehold qualification for voting for members of the Senate. The Whigs did not think the proposal required any special attention, regarding it only as a manifestation of the "levelling" character of the Democratic party. The Whig party in North Carolina cannot be said to have been aristocratic; no party in North Carolina could ever be or ever have been that with any possibility of success or even of continued existence as a party. But an aristocratic tendency was easily perceptible and this increased as the party gained strength in the East. It was its western strength which kept the party in the straight path. But the leaders, many of them, in private had small confidence in the people or in their ability to rule, if indeed their attitude may not be properly described as contemptuous. This was particularly true of the so-called Federal Whigs. This point of view was not unknown to some in the State; but the fact of continued Whig success and supremacy during a period of fourteen years is proof positive that it was never known generally. The Democrats felt it and their speakers and their newspapers emphasized it at every opportunity but they could not make the people believe it. It is to be remembered that the Whig leaders, regardless of their essential democracy or lack of democracy, were in the main high-minded, patriotic men who were, several of them, statesmen of high rank, who would have attained even higher place in almost any other State than North Carolina. They were in their prime in the early forties and were backed by a united and highly organized party. The Democrats, in contrast, had no leaders of even local first rank. They had no leader who, commanding the undivided support of the party, could perfect an organization which might hope to challenge the superbly organized



Whig machine. Bedford Brown lacked magnetism and was inclined to abstractions. Robert Strange was a fine, high-minded man, but he was fanciful and high-flown and was utterly unable to reach the people effectively. Saunders was primarily a politician. Louis D. Henry of Cumberland, had many qualities of leadership, but was vulnerable at many points. A number of young men gave promise, notable among whom were Charles Shepard, whose career, however, was to be cut short a year or two later. Not only in statesmanship, but in practical politics the Whigs were superior and it was no wonder that they distanced their opponents with considerable ease.

In another respect the Whigs had an advantage. In 1840 there were thirty-one newspapers in the State, twenty-five of which were political. Of these seventeen were Whig and eight Democratic. This would have been a greater advantage than it was but for the presence in North Carolina of 59,609 white adults who could neither read nor write. Another thing which weakened the Whig press was the fact that practically every editor was a Northern man. Gales of the *Register* was by descent and in point of view English and, in spite of the history of the newspaper, was distinctly Federalistic. The Democrats, therefore, had much to say of "Yankee editors" and "Northern Influence." Until 1841 the *Standard* was edited by Thomas Loring, who was a Northerner, but he left it in that year and started a paper of his own which three years later was supporting the Whig candidates and Whig doctrines, while the *Standard* was advertised for sale. Out of this apparent loss of Democratic strength was to arise a new and far more efficient leader of the Democracy and a new power in North Carolina.

The congressional elections in 1841 came in May and the campaign thus followed close on the heels of the legislative session. In March the North Carolina banks all suspended specie payments and the unsettled financial conditions played some part in the campaign, all to the advantage of the Whig party. Most things were to Whig advantage at this time and



the remarkable thing is that they were not able to accomplish more in the election now described. As it was they succeeded in winning three additional seats.

In the first district, Rayner was again returned, defeating R. H. Ballard. In the second, J. R. J. Daniel, who had been ousted from the position of attorney-general, replaced Jesse A. Bynum, who, after four terms, declined to be a candidate. He defeated William W. Cherry. Edward Stanley was unopposed in the third, Charles Shepard declined to run in the fourth and William A. Washington of Craven, a Whig, defeated Dr. Josiah O. Watson. In the fifth, James J. McKay was as strong as ever and defeated Mr. Baker, a Whig opponent. Three Democrats—M. T. Hawkins, the sitting member, William Russell and Archibald H. Arrington—contested the sixth, the last-mentioned being successful. Edmund Deberry maintained his strength in the seventh and defeated Edward McCollum. Romulus M. Saunders defeated Dr. James S. Smith of Orange in the eighth. A. H. Shepperd, after a term's absence, defeated David S. Reid in the ninth. Two Whigs—Abraham Rencher and Jonathan Worth—waged a heated contest in the tenth, the former winning easily. Henry W. Connor, after twenty years of consecutive and active service, declined to be a candidate again in the eleventh and Green W. Caldwell succeeded him, defeating D. M. Barringer. Two Whigs—James Graham, the sitting member, and Thomas L. Clingman, the new and rising star of the West, contested the twelfth, Graham winning but with some difficulty. In the thirteenth, Lewis Williams, the "Father of the House," then serving his thirteenth consecutive term, was chosen for the fourteenth and last time. He died February 23, 1842. His opponent was R. Murchison. After his death Anderson Mitchell was elected to succeed him.

The Whigs were naturally highly elated at their increased majority, but the change in national affairs and national politics caused by the death of President Harrison and the accession of John Tyler was soon to dampen their ardor considerably. The discussion of that, however, belongs to another chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CAMPAIGN AND LEGISLATURE OF 1842

The break in the national Whig party resulted from Tyler's vetoes of the two bank bills, beyond inflicting keen disappointment, had but small effect in North Carolina. The Whig party in the State was too strongly intrenched to be seriously injured. It intensified their devotion to Clay and they were entirely in sympathy with the quarrel with the President. Badger resigned from the cabinet and Mangum took a leading part in the activities of the Whigs in Congress, offering the resolution in the caucus for a Whig address against Tyler and in general directing the work of the caucus in organizing against him. He gained such reputation and influence in this way that on May 31, 1842, upon the resignation of Senator Southard, of New Jersey, he was chosen president *pro tem.* of the Senate to succeed him and thus was placed in direct succession to the presidency. He was elected again at the succeeding session and the President's fortunate departure from the deck of the Princeton a few moments before the explosion which killed two members of his Cabinet alone probably prevented Mangum's accession to the presidency.

The Democratic convention of 1842 met on January 10, at Raleigh. Only twenty-four counties were represented and about one hundred delegates were present. It was not a particularly enthusiastic gathering but its work is interesting. Henry Fitts of Warren was the presiding officer and Louis D. Henry of Cumberland, was unanimously nominated for governor. The platform demanded the resumption of specie payments by the North Carolina banks, but practically all the rest of it was devoted to national affairs. The Whigs were sharply attacked for spending three thousand dollars on the funeral of President Harrison. This piece of petty peanut politics excited the anger and contempt of William H. Haywood who made a vehement but entirely fruitless pro-

test to the convention against it. The convention was notable for the appearance and prominence of four men who were later to be party leaders of note and influence, namely, W. W. Avery, David S. Reid, Thomas Bragg, and John W. Ellis, the three last-named future governors of the State. All made speeches which excited comment. Henry also appeared and made a speech which was regarded as exceptional. Soon after the convention he wrote a letter of acceptance which was a document of alarming length containing not one word in regard to state affairs. His platform as drawn from his letter was as follows: "Free Trade—No Taxes for Protection—No Monopolies or Exclusive Privileges—Bank Reform."

Louis D. Henry was born in New Jersey in 1788 and graduating from Princeton in 1809 came to North Carolina to read law under his uncle, Edward Graham of New Bern. Upon his admission to the bar he settled at Fayetteville and soon gained distinction in his profession. He was a fiery and aggressive speaker, but was noted for the charm and courtesy of his manner. He was a man of extensive knowledge gained from wide reading. His temper was high and about 1812 he became involved in a quarrel with Thomas J. Stanly over a trivial matter and a duel followed resulting in the death of Stanly. In 1821 and 1822 he was a member of the House of Commons from Cumberland County and in 1830, 1831 and 1832 he represented the borough of Fayetteville. Van Buren appointed him minister to Belgium, but he declined to serve. He did, however, accept from Van Buren an appointment as commissioner to settle claims against Spain. Out of his services in this capacity the Whigs obtained some amusing campaign material.

The Whigs had been somewhat of the opinion that the opposition would not name a candidate for governor and they now asked with apparent wonder why there should be any opposition to Morehead, at the same time attributing it to what they called the unappeasable appetite of the Democrats for office. There had been doubt as to the holding of a state



convention but the action of the Democrats removed this, and on April 4, 1842, the Whig convention met at Raleigh. H. P. Poindexter was temporary chairman and Alfred Dockery was president. Thirty-five counties were represented. The platform repudiated Tyler and declared the Whigs for the future absolved of all responsibility for his acts. Morehead was unanimously nominated for governor and Henry Clay was declared to be the first, last, and only choice of the party in North Carolina for the presidency in 1844. This started the movement in his favor and other States followed. It had been thought that a candidate for the vice-presidency would also be named, but no mention was made of one and the opposition declared that the omission was due to a desire and expectation that some other State would name Badger for the position. How far this is true cannot at this date be determinated. The platform also declared for distribution. The convention recommended the same thorough county organization which had been so successful in 1840, but the party had to some extent lost its head and, being entirely confident, did nothing.

The campaign had many of the characteristics of those which had preceded it. There was the same denunciation, the same charges, and the same demagogical politics. Each party interestingly enough still charged the other with federalism. Needless to say, each party also studiously avoided the discussion of state affairs. The central committees of each issued long addresses without more than the mere mention of the State. Each party tried to emphasize the extravagance of the other and since the Whigs were in power in State and Nation, the Democrats had the decided advantage here. The funeral expenses of President Harrison continued to be denounced as did the furnishing of the new Capitol and the refurnishing of the governor's mansion. The *Standard*, calling attention to Morehead's horror in 1840 at the extravagant use of "soap and towels" in Washington, said, "That a man who talked so much about 'soap and towels' should have been cautious about bringing in such a bill for



'napkins'; that he who lauded gourds as proper vessels for drinking should not have given \$3.75 for sugar tongs, \$3.50 for butter knives, \$45 for a set of dining table, \$30 for tea trays, \$95 for a set of plated ware, \$10.50 for one soup ladle, 50 cents a piece for tumblers, \$4.50 for decanters, \$2.50 for a punch bowl, nor anything for 'nut crackers.' We do not say this is wrong; only so far as it is wrong to profess one thing as a candidate and do another as Governor."

The Whigs as far as possible retaliated in kind. They denounced Henry at every turn for having received a salary as commissioner of \$5,304.31 and the *Register* printed the figures in heavy black type at the head of a column in every issue. When Henry went to Washington in 1836 to take up his duties as commissioner, he announced to the secretary of state that he had convened and organized. The story was now revived and the Whigs promptly dubbed him "The Great Convener." The *Register* which made fun of him during the whole campaign, said:

If Mr. Henry, when but a commissioner, was able to assemble by himself, then, he was, by himself, an Assembly. Supposing him elected Governor of the State of North Carolina, he will also by virtue of his office be a Captain General, and therefore, it clearly follows that as soon as he shall convene as Governor in the City of Raleigh, he will be in his own proper person a GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The canvass was opened early in the spring at Hillsboro where both candidates were present but only Henry spoke. He was in very bad health, and fearing that he would be unable to continue the campaign, he at once went to the West and canvassed it from February to May when he gave up and retired from the canvass. The Whigs now felt easy and relaxed all their efforts.

On May 20, the Democrats had a great ratification convention in Salisbury, called for the purpose of impressing the West. It issued an address most of which as usual was in regard to national affairs, but in which the state Whig Administration was charged with the spoils system, pro-

scription, and extravagance. The meeting was expected by the Whigs at least, to take some action in the way of nominating a presidential candidate. There was much Calhoun preference observable among the members of the convention but no action was taken. Robert Strange, Michael Hoke, Bedford Brown, and David S. Reid were the chief speakers at the meeting and letters were read from Calhoun, Levi Woodbury, and James Buchanan.

One fairly significant fact of the campaign was the holding of a meeting in Lenoir County to protest against the freehold qualification for voting for senators. Every mention of the subject strengthened it for a future issue.

The election was held in August amidst the repeated warnings of each party that fraud was to be expected from the other. There is no indication that there was any. Morehead's majority was only 3,532, or 5,049 less than in 1840. But the total vote in 1840 was 80,000, which was nearly 15,000 larger than in any previous election. At this election the total vote was 72,000 and nearly all the loss fell on the Whigs, the Democratic vote being less than two thousand short of the figures of 1840. Whig overconfidence, increased by Henry's leaving the active canvass, was responsible. But the reduced majority was a small thing compared to the loss of the legislature. The Democrats, who were well organized for them and who had never relaxed their efforts, won both houses and thus had not only the election of a United States senator to succeed Graham, but also the redistricting of the State under the census of 1840 for Congress, for the state Senate, and for the House of Commons.

Democratic sentiment in the State was growing very favorable to Calhoun during this period and there were many of the party leaders, notable among whom was Saunders, who were frankly advocates of his nomination for the presidency in 1844. The State was not at all enthusiastic for Van Buren although there were many of his friends to be found. On September 2, a great dinner in Calhoun's honor was given at Shoeco Springs, then a seat of fashion and noted

as a gathering place for politicians. John Branch presided and made one of the speeches. Calhoun was of course the chief speaker. Among the others were Saunders, J. R. J. Daniel, and Charles Shepard. Letters were read from Thomas H. Benton, Levi Woodbury, William R. King, James Buchanan, Jacob Thompson, Silas Wright, Thomas W. Ritchie, T. W. Gilmer, and many others of less note in the Democracy.

Before the legislature convened, the tariff of 1842 became a law and went into effect. By this bill the North Carolina Whigs were placed in a dilemma. Mangum by this time was in effect a high tariff man, and while he voted against the bill, he made no secret that had his vote been needed to pass it, he would have voted affirmatively. Graham also voted against it but he endorsed it in 1844 and would probably have voted for it if necessary. In the House Stanly tried to avoid voting on the question at all but was forced to do so and voted for it. The rest of the Whigs and all the Democrats voted against it.

The legislature met at the customary time. Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe was chosen speaker of the Senate over Andrew Joyner, and Calvin Graves of Caswell, speaker of the House over D. M. Barringer of Cabarrus. The State watched with much interest to see what attitude the Democrats would take in relation to the disposition of the offices within the gift of the legislature. Many Democrats frankly favored the spoils system and a series of able articles entitled, "The General Assembly," which appeared in the *Standard* in the autumn, had advocated a clean sweep of the Whigs. When the legislature met, the Democrats to some extent had abandoned the non-partisan attitude which had hitherto characterized them. Charles Manly, for nineteen years clerk of the House, was turned out in favor of Louis H. Marsteller who had shortly before been ousted by the Whigs from his position of collector of the port of Wilmington. John H. Wheeler, a Democrat, was elected treasurer, defeating Charles L. Hinton, the Whig incumbent, two Democratic



solicitors were chosen and a Democratic attorney-general to succeed Hugh McQueen who resigned, and seven Democrats were elected to the Council of State. The last mentioned elections in particular aroused the wrath of the Whigs. But the Whig secretary of state was unanimously re-elected and the Whig comptroller was re-elected.

Governor Morehead's message was a statesmanlike utterance devoted mainly to the question of internal improvements and containing a large number of specific recommendations on the subject. A proposition to print five copies for each member was defeated as useless extravagance and one copy for each was finally ordered to be printed.

The election of United States senator at first occupied much of the attention and thought of the majority. Bedford Brown, desiring endorsement after his resignation, was of course a candidate, and R. M. Saunders, on the strength of his campaign against Morehead in 1840 and the feeling against Brown was also in the race. Others mentioned were Louis D. Henry, Charles Shepard, William H. Haywood, Charles Fisher, and Robert Strange. The contest was accompanied by the most bitter hostility and as Moore says, "shameful contention." Much outside pressure was brought to bear in favor of Brown which probably injured as much as it helped his cause. Jackson, Silas Wright, and Thomas H. Benton all wrote letters urging his selection. The caucus met and took four ballots in all of which Brown led, but Saunders and his friends would not yield. Brown then suggested to Saunders that both should withdraw in the interest of harmony, but Saunders, relying on gaining some Whig votes, refused to consider it. The Whigs, anxious to split the Democratic party, were loudly supporting Saunders, but they did not carry their support to the point of voting in a body for him. Brown behaved very well in the whole matter, for in the beginning he had instructed his supporters to withdraw his name in the event that Saunders led in the caucus. The political preferences of the two men probably had some influence in the contest. Brown was a strong supporter of Van Buren



while Saunders, as has been already mentioned, was an avowed supporter of Calhoun. When the election came, a deadlock resulted. After the first five ballots none were taken for some days. In this period the *Standard* angered many by a protest against the sacrifice of the interests of the party for those of a faction. The *Standard* was supposed by many to be controlled by William H. Haywood and on that account many Democrats disliked it. Finally on the ninth ballot, the Democrats abandoned both Brown and Saunders who had been withdrawn, and elected Haywood. Brown and Saunders were very bitter against each other and the breach in the party did not heal easily.

The legislature with its Democratic majority was not inclined to any liberal policy of internal improvements. The report of the committee on the subject strongly condemned the methods of state aid already adopted and declared that as the State was in no financial condition to assist any general scheme of internal improvement, the time and money spent on investigations and surveys was sheer waste. The bonds of the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad, which the State had endorsed, had in the meantime gone to protest and an act was passed authorizing the Literary Board to invest \$50,000 in redeeming them, and at the same time a complete investigation of the affairs of the road was ordered. The Democrats doubtless hated to spend the money on such an object, but the name of the State was dear to all and repudiation was abhorred. The whole matter of the loans made from the Literary Fund now came up. The publication of the names of the borrowers was ordered despite the protests of the Whigs. The reason of their opposition appeared when the report showed that of the fifty-five borrowers, forty-seven were Whigs who held \$97,469, of the total loans of \$108,955. Much Democratic criticism followed which was keenly resented by the Whigs. How far politics had really entered into the making of loans cannot be discovered, but the efforts of the Whigs to stifle the investigation would lead to the

belief that there was at least an element of truth in the Democratic charges.

The legislature devoted considerable time to the question of the banks and to the financial situation generally. W. B. Shepard introduced a relief bill which provided for the loan to the people of the counties in proportion to their federal population of treasury notes to the amount of a million dollars. On January 2, 1843, the stockholders of the State Bank offered to surrender their charter and it soon became known that if the relief bill passed that the bank would wind up its affairs. The relief bill failed, partly because of this pressure and the *Standard* which was very friendly to the State Bank at once charged it with attempting to control the legislature.

The movement for a penitentiary was much stronger at this session and it was also proposed to work criminals on the public roads. There was need of some reform of the system of punishment. Twenty-five crimes were punishable by death for the first offense and five more for the second offense. Innumerable offenses were punished with the pillory or whipping post or both. The State was awakening to the fact that whipping, generally speaking, made bad citizens and much opposition was manifest.

Catawba, McDowell and Union counties were established and ten academies, two manufacturing companies and seven military companies were incorporated. The State was re-districted, the number of congressional districts under the new appointment falling from thirteen to nine. The Whigs of course opposed the districting, charging a gerrymander. In all the three kinds of districts there was doubtless some gerrymandering, but so has there always been in North Carolina, and there were no striking instances of it.

Probably the most interesting political happening of the session was the series of discussions of a set of resolutions introduced by Cadwallader Jones, Jr., of Orange. They declared the right of the legislature to instruct United States senators and the duty of the latter to obey or resign. They further declared that North Carolina would never consent

to an imposition of taxes for a particular interest or occupation and condemned the tariff of 1842 as such a tax and also as a violation of the compromise of 1833. The bankrupt law was also condemned. The refunding of the fine imposed upon General Jackson by Judge Hall in 1812 was demanded and the senators were instructed and the representatives were requested to assist in carrying the resolutions into effect. The Whigs resisted the resolutions at every step by offering very skillfully prepared amendments to every section, all of them designed to embarrass the Democrats and by demanding a roll call on every possible question. The Democrats stood solidly together on every point, voted down the amendments, some of which they themselves offered later independently and passed to keep their record clear, and carried the resolutions through both houses without any substantial change.

On May 31, 1843, Loring announced his retirement as editor of the *Standard*, and William W. Holden wrote his salutatory. He declared himself ever to have been "a Democratic Republican of the school of '98 and '99," and stated that he was now a Democrat because the members of that party "have always approved themselves the friends and supporters of equal rights; because they have ever been, and are now, the advocates of the many against the few; because whilst they yield to the Federal Government the exercise of its acknowledged and undoubted constitutional power, they at the same time guard with peculiar vigilance the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the respective States."

William Woods Holden, one of the most interesting of the figures of North Carolina history and destined to become one of the most dominant in the politics of the State, was born in Orange County in 1818. Trained in the office of Dennis Heartt, the editor of the *Hillsboro Recorder*, he was an enthusiastic Whig. Going to Raleigh in 1837, he studied law and obtained his license. At the same time he became an associate editor of the *Star* the Whig paper edited by Lemay which was in a sense representative of the Republican Whigs just as the *Register* was the organ of the Federal Whigs. He



displayed unusual ability but there was small hope of his being able to become the editor of a Whig paper and he faced the prospect of giving up journalism, to which his talents inclined him, or of remaining in a subordinate position. It is extremely likely that he was beginning to feel himself out of sympathy with the dominant forces in the Whig party as they inclined more and more towards aristocratic opinions. At this juncture James B. Shepherd offered to sell him the *Standard* on very easy terms if he would conduct it as the organ of the Democratic party. Holden accepted with less than ten minutes deliberation and threw himself into the work of advancing Democratic principles with an ability, and an enthusiasm which indicated clearly that his heart was indeed in his new cause. The Whigs sneered at him publicly, cursed and reviled him in private, and laid up a store of hatred for him which was to have momentous influence in North Carolina during the next three decades. The Democrats accepted him not only cheerfully and heartily, but as a gift from Heaven, and his influence grew rapidly. With his assumption of control the *Standard* gained new force and strength and the Democratic party entered upon a new era. Holden was a tremendous fighter and he was an intuitive, adroit, and masterly politician. It is no exaggeration to say that under his leadership and through it the Democrats developed an organization while the power of the Whigs steadily waned. One of his first acts and one which showed his foresight was the removal of Van Buren's name from the head of the *Standard's* editorial column as the Democratic candidate for 1844. He knew intuitively that its presence might be of great embarrassment later.

The congressional elections attracted the usual attention. The results showed that the Democrats had elected five, Archibald H. Arrington, J. R. J. Daniel, James J. McKay, David S. Reid, and R. M. Saunders. The Whigs elected four, Thomas L. Clingman, who this time defeated James Graham, D. M. Barringer, Edmund Deberry, and Kenneth Rayner. Stanly was defeated by Arrington of Nash. It



was during this campaign that Stanly coined a phrase which is now world-wide. The news reached him that Nash County, which was almost solidly Democratic, would not allow him to speak within its borders. Stanly had not intended going to the county at all, but he threw on opposition of this kind and at once announced a date on which he would speak in the county. On the appointed day he faced a tremendous crowd, practically all his political opponents, and began his speech. Reciting the facts which had led to his coming he closed his explanation as follows: "I realize that I am facing the unterrified Democracy of Nash County, but I want you to know and to bear witness that I face you unterrified." "The unterrified Democracy" has been a political phrase ever since.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1844

The political pot of 1844 began to boil in North Carolina by September, 1843, and by the middle of October, both parties had issued calls for state conventions to meet in December. The Democrats were particularly active and confident, probably because of their success in 1842 and in the congressional elections of 1843.

The Whig convention met first, assembling in Raleigh on December 8. It was an enthusiastic and united body of 200 delegates, representing 52 counties, and was the largest convention that the State had had to this time. S. F. Patterson was temporary chairman and George E. Spruill was president. Edward Stanly and Charles Manly had both been mentioned for the nomination for governor, and Stanly went so far as to write declining it. There was no need for his anxiety on the subject. William A. Graham was an easy favorite and was nominated unanimously. Clay was endorsed and the platform declared for a national bank. It also declared for tariff duties as opposed to direct taxes and favored incidental protection from the duties. Distribution as usual was endorsed. Morehead's administration was highly commended. George E. Badger and Edward B. Dudley were chosen as delegates to the national convention.

William Alexander Graham was born near Vesuvius Furnace in Lincoln County in 1804. Prepared for college in Mecklenburg County, at Pleasant Retreat Academy in Lincolnton, and at the Hillsboro Academy, he matriculated at the University in 1820 and graduated in 1824 with high honors in a very distinguished class. He studied law under Judge Ruffin and was admitted to the bar in 1827. His political life began in 1833 when he was elected as a borough member from Hillsboro to the House of Commons. He was re-elected twice in succession and was the Whig candidate for speaker at the last session. In 1836 he was a member of the

House from Orange County and in 1837 was the Whig candidate for Congress from that district but was defeated by Dr. William Montgomery. The next year he returned to the House and was elected speaker over Michael Hoke. In 1840 he was re-elected both to the House and the speakership, and, as will be remembered, was soon after elected to the United States Senate. After his defeat for re-election he had again engaged in the practice of his profession.

Graham's letter of acceptance, which was quite an elaborate one, was devoted almost entirely to the discussion of national finance. He expressed regret at his call to the office, saying that it broke in upon his agricultural pursuits. Holden took this phrase as the text for a very clever editorial in which he said:

When and where did the delicate lawyer-like hands of William A. Graham become accustomed to the handles of the plough? Will nobody enlighten us? The truth is, the idea is perfectly ridiculous. This reluctant "breaking away" from "agricultural pursuits" was put in for no other purpose than that of conveying to the minds of the farmers of the State the impression that he is a practical farmer. . . . We believe Mr. Graham does live in the center of a 10-acre patch. This extensive farm is bounded on the south by the waters of the Enoe—on the north by the Oxford road—on the east by a magnificent branch at least two feet wide—and on the west by the ancient village of Hillsboro, and over all look proudly down the Ocaneechee Mountains. We shall therefore call him the Ocaneechee Farmer, a pretty title and romantic. And now imagine him out at work. Of course his coat is off, his sleeves rolled up, and his whole soul set against being broken off from his "agricultural pursuits." He ploughs along; and ever as he gets to the turning row he kicks the mud from the ploughshare with his elegant slipper, and swears, with all the sternness of a man bent on making corn that he will farm it. Anon he denounces the late Federal Convention for "breaking in" upon his "agricultural pursuits," casts a last melancholy look at his beloved grubbing hoe; and then in a spirit of beautiful desperation, rushes to

his office, seizes his pen, and signs the letter of acceptance. The deed is done. Henceforth his corn will grow; but oh! agony! he will not see it.

The Democratic convention assembled just a week after the Whig meeting. It was not so large a body, the delegates numbering only 141, and only 31 counties, of which nine were western, being represented. Louis D. Henry of Edgecombe, presided and with Charles Fisher was chosen a delegate to the national convention. Michael Hoke of Lincoln, who was an open and expressed candidate for the nomination and the first in the history of the State, was unanimously nominated for governor. The platform which was rather elaborate, condemned a national bank, endorsed a tariff for revenue, expressing strong opposition to protection and the tariff of 1842. It also condemned direct taxes. It expressed approval of the veto power which was then being sharply condemned by the Whigs on account of their experience with Jackson and more particularly with Tyler, favored the return of Jackson's fine, and approving of "properly regulated State banks based on specie capital," demanded regulation of the North Carolina banks by the legislature.

The Democratic candidate for governor was like Graham a native of Lincoln County. Born in 1810, he was six years younger than his opponent. He received most of his education at Captain Partridge's famous school at Middletown, Connecticut, and later studied law under Judge Tucker of Virginia, and Robert H. Burton of North Carolina. He was deeply interested in politics and had been a member of the House of Commons for five terms from 1834 to 1842.

The chief event of 1844 in the minds of the Whigs was Clay's visit to the State. He had been previously invited repeatedly, but had never been in the State until April, 1844, when he visited Raleigh and Wilmington at both of which places he spoke. The writer recently talked with a North Carolinian who heard him in Wilmington. His comment was that the speech was very fine, but that it was "cast in the shade" by one delivered by William W. Cherry of Bertie.



At both places immense crowds attended, but the Raleigh meeting was naturally the larger and more important. From all over the State the Whigs poured out to greet their idol. Men travelled hundreds of miles in wagons and on horseback, camping on the way and in Raleigh to hear and see the great Whig chieftain. He reached Raleigh in the evening and was met outside the town by a large delegation and carried to the governor's mansion. That night there was a huge demonstration with speeches at the capitol from many local and visiting Whigs, including: B. W. Leigh of Virginia, and "Parson" Brownlow of Tennessee. The next day Clay was welcomed at the capitol by Badger and introduced by Morehead, after which he delivered a long address which, while he said it was not intended to be political, was of course an appeal for the Whig policies.

Badger's enthusiasm for Clay at this time provoked the *Standard* to publish the following sentiments concerning him, which Badger, as a member of the Jackson committee, had written in 1828:

You have seen the Secretary of State challenging to mortal combat a member of Congress for daring in his place on the floor of the Senate to examine with freedom and expose with boldness the conduct of the Secretary. You have seen the same officer, forgetful of what belongs to his high station, assume the character of a traveling speechmaker and harangue public gatherings in Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Virginia, boasting of his intrepidity and his virtue, and discharging his malignity towards Jackson, sometimes in gross abuse, and sometimes in impious appeals to heaven.

By this time the question of the annexation of Texas was the dominant issue in the minds of every one. All the possible candidates for presidential nomination had been asked to define their views and Van Buren had at once given his which were unequivocal in their opposition to annexation. Clay had hitherto refrained from expressing his own views but as Van Buren seemed certain of the Democratic nomination, it appeared to Clay that here was his opportunity to

dismiss the Texas question from the presidential campaign and thus be able to fight the Democrats on his chosen issues of the bank and the tariff without the public attention being diverted. Therefore, while he was in Raleigh, after consultation with Badger, Stanly, and Morehead, he wrote his famous "Raleigh letter" in which he expressed in no uncertain terms his opposition to such expansion. Sentiment in the State was divided, but, generally speaking, the Whigs opposed and the Democrats favored annexation. When the treaty finally came before the Senate, Mangum voted against it and Haywood for it.

Clay was duly nominated by the Whig convention which met in Baltimore on May 1. North Carolina had a full delegation present but took no especially prominent part in the deliberations. Richard H. Hines was one of the vice-presidents.

In the Democratic convention which also met in Baltimore in the same month, quite the reverse was true. Romulus M. Saunders was easily the most prominent figure in the body. He called the convention to order and, as soon as it was organized, moved to adopt the two-thirds rule which defeated Van Buren, to secure whose nomination for vice-president in 1832, it had first been devised. The North Carolina delegation had no particular candidate. Henry was for Van Buren and Fisher was for Calhoun. Saunders was also for Calhoun but did not think that he could be nominated. The delegation was not even a unit on the question of the two-thirds rule, dividing evenly on it. The vote of the State on the various ballots is interesting.

*First Ballot*—Van Buren 2; Cass 4; Johnson 5.

*Second Ballot*—Cass 5; Johnson 5.

*Third Ballot*—Johnson 11.

*Fourth Ballot*—Cass 11.

*Fifth Ballot*—Cass 7; Johnson 4.

*Sixth Ballot*—Cass 7; Johnson 4.

*Seventh Ballot*—Van Buren 2; Cass 7; Johnson 2.

*Eighth Ballot*—Van Buren 2; Cass 8; Calhoun 1.

*Ninth Ballot*—Polk 11.

Polk's nomination was welcomed by North Carolina Democrats for he was popular in the State and they felt much pride in his North Carolina birth and the fact of his having been educated at the University. The Whigs at once said that he was a small man whose unfitness for the presidency was indicated by the fact that he was not voted for in the early ballots of the convention and that the ability of the convention to unite on him after the long contest showed that he was a weak man. They also argued with much length and gravity that his grandfather had been a Tory in the Revolution. The Democrats retorted that he was a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence and the Whigs argued that any copy of that sacred document which bore the name of Ezekiel Polk was of necessity a forgery. This characteristic argument lasted during the entire campaign.

The state campaign got under way early. Plans were made for a joint canvass, but Graham was taken desperately ill and for a time his life was despaired of. After his recovery he entered upon the campaign and at several places he and Hoke met. The chief subject of debate was annexation which Hoke defended and Graham opposed. Graham paid comparatively little attention to the East, but canvassed the West rather thoroughly. His attention to the West caused the Democrats to revive to some extent the talk of sectional division.

The campaign was very spirited throughout. Graham was somewhat stiff and formal and never under any circumstances lost his dignity. He was the most cultured of all the governors of North Carolina, and was a man of majestic presence who always attracted attention. Mr. Nash says of him: "He was at this time the handsomest man in public life in North Carolina. The tones of his voice were mellow and harmonious, and, though not strong, well modulated. His action was free, easy and graceful, on occasion warming into energy. His matter was carefully arranged so as to give his argument the effect of cumulation. He was fair and



stately, and perfectly honest and sincere in the position he took. His public addresses, though always orderly arranged, are never closely reasoned. He knew the danger of a logical short cut in dealing with public questions. Its beauty and force could be appreciated only by the initiated, and such were not his fellow citizens whom he was addressing. He very seldom dealt in sophistry. Indeed so practical a mind as his could rarely do so. In short the matter of his public speeches was interesting and instructive, while his manner was always attractive." Hoke was a man of great charm and enthusiasm of manner. Magnetic, a good popular orator and debater, and generally liked, he made a formidable opponent. His character was above reproach in every relation of life and his ability far above the average. In sharp contrast to Graham, he was possessed of much humor and readiness of wit. The two in joint debate furnished an interesting contrast. Quoting Mr. Nash again: "Graham, more learned, more experienced, calmer, more dignified and impressive; Hoke more nimble, quicker, brighter and more entertaining."

The campaign was devoid of any special interest. There was, however, a good deal of journalistic activity. In June Loring finally took the plunge he had apparently been meditating for some time and announced his support of the Whigs. The *Standard* was intensely active in the campaign and its strength alarmed the Whigs who never lost an opportunity of denouncing it and its editor. The *Fayetteville Observer*, whose editor was particularly hostile to Holden on account of his apostacy, said editorially during the campaign: "Of all the vile, unscrupulous blackguard sheets published in the United States, we doubt if there be one that will compare in these particulars with the *Raleigh Standard*, acting notoriously upon the principle of never retracting one of its thousand of falsehoods and never abandoning one, however often refuted, it is perfectly callous to public opinion and occupies itself wholly in devising and collecting foul slanders which it dins into the public ear, until some of its readers, we have reason to think, actually believe those fables to whose utter



falsehood not even constant reiteration can close the eyes of their hired originator and propagator."

In July the Whigs held their great western meeting at Statesville. Graham, D. M. Barringer, H. C. Jones, and Waddy Thompson of South Carolina, were the speakers. The assembled crowds were also entertained by a great barbecue.

The election resulted in a Whig victory, Graham's majority being 3,153 in a total vote of 82,019. The legislature was Whig in both houses, but by a majority of only two in the Senate. In September Hoke died of malaria contracted in his canvass of the East and a very promising career was thus cut short.

The presidential campaign was conducted with much enthusiasm for the rest of the time, the central committees of both parties issuing various addresses to the people and as far as possible perfecting their local organization. The Democrats were entirely hopeful of the results in the Nation, but they had small hope for carrying the State, it being still very clearly manifest that the Whigs could maintain their control. The returns of the election showed a majority for Clay of 3,390 in a total of 62,488. The vote in the presidential election was smaller than that in the state election by nearly twenty thousand and each party lost practically the same number. The only explanation seems to be that the people at last were taking a greater interest in state than in national elections.

When the legislature met four members of the Senate had died and the new elections had caused a tie. The election of a speaker came when the Democrats, on account of an absent Whig, had a majority of one. A deadlock followed since the Democratic candidate, Louis D. Wilson, would not vote for himself. Later the Democrats sought to elect Thomas N. Cameron or Weldon N. Edwards. The Whigs, who supported in turn Joyner, Dockery, and Francis, finally proposed to the Democrats to throw dice for the speaker. The offer was contemptuously refused. They then offered to

allow the Democrats to elect the speaker if they themselves should be allowed to name all the clerks and doorkeepers and upon the refusal of the Democrats to consider this offer, they expressed their readiness to surrender all the lesser positions for the speakership. The Democrats, finally despairing of ever electing one of their party, concentrated on Burgess S. Gaither of Burke, a moderate Whig, and elected him. In the House Edward Stanly was elected speaker over Calvin Graves.

The session of the legislature so far as work accomplished was not of more than average interest and importance. The Whigs were very bitter over the election of Gaither and when they found a little later that Ennet of Onslow, had presented a forged certificate of election which he, however, at the time believed to be genuine, and although he had later received and presented the correct one, they expelled him. He was triumphantly re-elected immediately. The Texas question was in the minds of everyone and the House of Commons finally passed, by a majority of eleven, resolutions condemning annexation, but they did not represent the sentiment of the State. The Whigs had opposed annexation because the Democrats wanted it and because Clay opposed it. Upon reflection and after Clay's "Alabama letter" many of them were now frank expansionists.

Among the more important legislation were acts giving authority for the foreclosure of the mortgage which the State held upon the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad and instructing the governor to bid as high as three hundred thousand dollars for it; providing for the submission of the question of a penitentiary to the people at the next election; authorizing the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad to issue \$100,000 in bonds to be endorsed by the State to redeem similar bonds which had become due; making provision for the education of poor deaf mutes and blind persons; and providing for the preservation of certain historical records of the State. As evidence of the growth of humanitarian sentiment, two laws may be mentioned which were designed to prevent impris-

onment for debt except in case of fraud and to set aside an exemption from execution of tools for one laborer, one bed, bedstead and covering for every two members of the family, two months provisions for the family, four hogs, and all necessary household and kitchen furniture up to the amount of fifty dollars.

Some interest was excited by the election of officers. John H. Wheeler was ousted from the treasurership in favor of Charles L. Hinton. Wheeler and Governor Morehead had disputed on the question of the right of the governor to receive compensation as a member of the Internal Improvement Board, both Dudley and Morehead having drawn *per diem* as members. The Whigs now retaliated by attempting to cast discredit on Wheeler, making insinuations as to the entire honesty of his administration of the treasurer's office, but they were unable to make a case. Judge Gaston had died since the last legislature, and Governor Morehead had nominated Badger to his Democratic Council of State to fill the vacancy. The council refused to accept him, and Frederick Nash was finally selected, and the legislature confirmed the election. David F. Caldwell took his place on the Superior bench.

Graham in his inaugural, which was a splendid address of lofty patriotism and high tone, condemned the habit of the people of North Carolina of devoting so much of their time, attention, and interest to the discussion of national affairs, and made a strong plea for internal improvements and education.

When Congress assembled in December, 1844, for the short session, the immediate annexation of Texas was determined upon. William H. Haywood introduced a bill for the purpose, which erected a slave State out of part of the Republic and annexed the rest to Nebraska as non-slaveholding white territory. In defending it he endorsed the view that Congress could legislate on the subject of slavery in a territory with entire propriety and constitutionality. As a matter of fact, no one in North Carolina at this time would have



taken any other position. Haywood's bill made no progress in the Senate, and he was really the author and chief promoter of the bills known as Benton's bills, one of which finally passed as the joint resolution by which annexation was accomplished. Mangum voted against it. In the House all the North Carolina Democrats voted for it and all the Whigs against it. Rayner complained that he was in favor of annexation as were many of the other Southern Whigs, but that they were opposed to the particular method employed and that the Democrats would not give them a chance to explain their position.

The congressional elections of 1845 were notable for the fact that both parties held nominating conventions in practically every district. The canvass was prosecuted with great vigor, the tariff and Texas being the chief subjects of discussion. In the first district, the Democrats made no nomination, and Clingman, having won the Whig nomination, seemed to have things all his own way. He had made a good many enemies in his own party and his voting at the previous session for the repeal of the rule against the reception of abolition petitions had not increased his popularity. So during the last few weeks of the campaign, James Graham, who had contested with him for the nomination, offered himself as an independent Whig and, receiving the solid Democratic vote and dividing the Whig vote, was elected. In the second district, D. M. Barringer was re-elected over Charles Fisher. In the fourth, Jonathan Worth defeated Alfred Dockery in the Whig convention, but the latter bolted and was elected. The Democrats had no candidate. These three were the only districts which the Whigs carried. The Democrats won six, thus gaining one. David S. Reid was successful over A. B. McMillan in the third. J. C. Dobbin, defeating J. H. Haughton, succeeded R. M. Saunders in the fifth. Saunders declined to run and was at this time bitterly disappointed at his failure to secure a cabinet position which he and almost every one else had expected him to obtain. A little later he was appointed minister to Spain. James



J. McKay was re-elected in the sixth, defeating Thomas D. Meares. J. R. J. Daniel defeated R. S. Bond in the seventh. Henry S. Clark was successful over R. S. Donnell in the eighth. Asa Biggs won in the ninth, defeating David Outlaw who had entered the campaign, taking the place of the brilliant W. W. Cherry, who died after receiving the nomination.

The warfare between the *Fayetteville Observer* and the *Standard* continued and the former in its venom exceeded the bounds of decency. In May it contained the following editorial notice:

People talk about a Mr. W. W. Holden in a very ugly manner hereabouts. There are naughty folks that even accuse him of this very crime of treason—treason to his friends, his benefactors, his party. They charge him with having bartered his conscience for filthy lucre; of suddenly crossing over to the enemy in the broad day-light, and belying his whole past life.

Even good Democrats in this vicinage quietly admit these charges, and we must frankly tell our august accuser and judge, that no man of any party here regards or respects him. Those he acts with constantly fear him—they know not how soon in the very thickest of the fight he might turn his weapons; while the uncharitable Whigs loathe him, as being diseased with a vile leprosy that has not left a single virtue unconsumed amid his thousand meannesses and vices.

Holden in a dignified reply said:

No notice can be taken of Mr. Hale according to the usages of gentlemen, for he has long since proclaimed himself by his own pen, as well as by his own deeds, without the pale of honor. . . . So we shall strike the *Observer* from our exchange list, and, in so doing, call upon the press of the State to sustain us in an effort to promote the just courtesies and proprieties of life.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1846

The Democratic central committee in October, 1845, announced that January 8, 1846, the anniversary of Jackson's victory at New Orleans, would be fittingly celebrated by the meeting of the Democratic convention in Raleigh. The Whig convention was soon after summoned to meet on January 12.

County meetings of both parties were held, the Whigs, however, failing to display the same activity as their opponents because it was already a settled fact that Graham would be renominated. The Democratic meetings for the most part contented themselves with pledging support to the nominee of the convention, but some went further and endorsed particular candidates. Calvin Graves, W. W. Avery, Charles Fisher, Weldon N. Edwards, James J. McKay, D. W. Courts, W. F. Leak, and Asa Biggs were among those thus mentioned. Party sentiment seems to have been fairly closely fixed upon Charles Fisher, but he declined a few days before the convention met to allow the use of his name.

The convention met on the appointed day. Thirty-five counties were represented by one hundred and fifty delegates. George Bower of Ashe County, who in spite of advanced age, had ridden over one hundred miles on horseback through the most inclement weather to be present at the convention, was temporary chairman, and Louis D. Henry was president. The nomination of a candidate for governor was made by ballot of the counties, the first time such a plan was tried in the State. Only sixty-seven delegates voted in this and all of them cast their ballots for Green W. Caldwell of Mecklenburg. The platform denounced a national bank, declared for a low tariff, and endorsed the administration on all other matters as well. The Democratic state committee was created to take the place of the central committee. Speeches were made by Louis D. Henry, R. M. Saunders, Burton Craige,

Abraham W. Venable, Robert Strange, John W. Ellis, Thomas Bragg, James S. Smith, R. P. Dick, John H. Wheeler, John F. Hoke, J. L. Clemmons and a number of others.

The Whig convention assembled on January 12. Dr. F. J. Hill was the presiding officer throughout. Forty counties sent a total of one hundred and forty-one delegates. Graham was unanimously renominated and appeared and addressed the convention. The platform declared for a revenue tariff with incidental protection, favored distribution, and demanded Oregon without war. It declared the bitter opposition of the party to the sub-treasury. Speeches were made by Badger, Henry W. Miller, John Kerr, and Edward Stanly.

On January 20, Caldwell, on account of ill health and other personal reasons, not least of which probably was his disinclination to make the contest against Graham, declined the Democratic nomination. For some time it was seriously questionable if any other nomination would be made. Walter F. Leak of Richmond County, was then nominated by county meetings and newspapers in Lincoln, Catawba, Mecklenburg, Union, Montgomery, and Anson, and declared himself a candidate before the people. On March 17, the Democratic state committee, or such members as could be gotten together in Raleigh, ignoring Leak, nominated James B. Shepard of Wake, who had declined to be a candidate before the convention. Leak at once announced his intention of remaining in the field because of his being so deeply committed and because much of his support was still behind him. Another ground for his action was the expressed belief that the conduct of Democratic affairs was in the hands of a clique of Raleigh politicians. The term "Raleigh politicians," in those days, carried much the same signification to the rest of the State that "New York politician" does today. Holden was the particular person against whom the charge was directed, and he was undoubtedly responsible for Shepard's nomination.

Shepard, immediately after his acceptance, entered upon an active campaign, going to the East at once and reserving the West for his last work. He had most of the party behind him, but enough strength remained with Leak to make success impossible for either. Much influence was brought to bear upon Leak to induce him to withdraw but apparently without effect. But on April 18 he wrote to Shepard suggesting the reference of their claims to a full meeting of the state committee, and that in the meantime both should retire from the canvass. Shepard agreed at once to the first suggestion, declined to consider the second, and a meeting of the committee was at once called. On May 18, the committee decided in favor of Shepard, and Leak withdrew.

James Biddle Shepard was a native of Craven County; a member of a distinguished family, and a man of great wealth. He was educated at the University where he graduated in 1834 at the head of his class. He studied law in Philadelphia, covering the entire course in a few months, and was at once admitted to the bar. His talents were great, but he was indolent and having no need to obtain practice he paid little attention to his profession. He was appointed United States district attorney in 1840 by Van Buren to succeed William H. Haywood, but he resigned after a few months. He was a member of the Senate from Wake in 1842 and a member of the House of Commons in 1844. At both sessions he displayed great activity and talent. He had much reputation as a speaker and was much in demand. He was the author of an epic entitled "North Carolina," which was greatly praised by his friends at the time of its publication, but which is deservedly unknown today.

The campaign, if we may judge from the press of the day, was devoid of any great interest. Shepard was a good campaigner, for he was a good "mixer" and his ability as a speaker won him attention wherever he appeared. Also he was deeply interested in if not hopeful of success. He covered the State very thoroughly and met Governor Graham a number of times in joint debate in which, if he did not



cover himself with glory, he at least held his own fairly well. Graham, however, had grown greatly in the affection and esteem of the people, and Democratic factional disputes had had their effect. In the midst of the campaign two things happened which had a disastrous effect upon the Democratic cause. The first was the outbreak of the war with Mexico. The Whigs immediately took the stand that the war was unjustifiable and that it was brought on entirely by President Polk. They did not dare, however, to advocate what many of them would have preferred, namely, a policy of non-support of the war, bitterly as they attacked it. But they did little to help the cause. Ten companies of volunteers were asked for and by July, 1846, forty companies had answered the call. But Democrats were the moving spirits behind all the war preparations. A large majority of Whigs were opposed, and they made their opposition count in the campaign. It must not be supposed, however, that the war brought Whig victory; that was already fated, but it did increase the party majority.

The other happening was the sudden resignation of William H. Haywood from the United States Senate. Haywood was not the sort of man to be bound very closely by any party. He was a Democrat but an entirely independent one. When he accepted the election to the Senate, he excited much surprise by writing a letter to the legislature in which he declared that he demanded the right of a certain independence in his political action. The occasion of his resignation was the tariff bill of 1846, drafted largely by James J. McKay, who was now chairman of the committee on ways and means, but commonly known as the Walker tariff because of the part Robert J. Walker, the secretary of the treasury, had in making it. When the bill was before the House, all the North Carolina Democrats voted for it. Haywood had favored the McKay tariff bill of 1844 which had provided for a somewhat higher scale of duties than the bill of 1846; but he had been steadily coming to believe in protection, and he now opposed the Walker tariff because its duties

were too low to have any perceptible protective influence. Haywood had been a close friend of President Polk at the University of North Carolina, and the intimacy continued in Washington. It was assumed that Haywood desired to be the President's spokesman on the floor of the Senate and for a time he was so regarded by some. But Polk was a strict party man, and it was impossible for two such men to remain in substantial agreement. It became known that Haywood was opposed to the bill, and Polk used every possible argument to induce him to vote for it and not to resign. His diary records very interestingly their interviews on the subject. Haywood, however, was obdurate and accordingly resigned in preference to voting for the bill. This made the passage of the bill very doubtful, but it finally got through by one vote. Haywood's action was in strict accordance with the Democratic doctrine of senatorial responsibility, but few Democrats were able then or thereafter to see it, and he was bitterly denounced by Democratic press and Democratic speakers, in and out of the State, as a traitor, apostate, and renegade. His resignation hurt the Democratic party in the campaign.

Haywood was not without defenders. Thomas H. Benton in a speech in the Senate commended highly his purity of character and motive. Polk himself in his diary says:

After the Cabinet adjourned, and about 3:30 o'clock, I was astonished to learn that Senator Haywood had today addressed a letter to the Vice President resigning his seat in the Senate of the United States. It was a great error, and I am sure that he will greatly regret it. The fate of the tariff bill will now depend on the vote of Senator Jarnegan. If he votes as he declared he would today, the bill will still pass. I sincerely regret Mr. Haywood's course. I was at college with him and have ever been his friend. I believe him to be an honest and pure man, but a man of great vanity and possessing a good deal of self esteem. He is, I think, ambitious, and had probably a desire to have some participation or authorship in effecting the contemplated tariff reform. From some feeling of this sort, and without due reflection, I con-

jecture, he took ground against the tariff bill, and, having committed himself, was of too proud a spirit, when he found himself separated from all his friends, and that none of them would go with him, to recede. He is, moreover, nervous, and in an excited state, no doubt, tendered his resignation. I give not the slightest heed to the painful insinuations which I learned this evening are made by illiberal persons as to the motives and causes which have induced his course. I differ with him in my opinion and think he has erred in his resigning, but that he has done so from good motives, and from the causes stated above I have little doubt.

Haywood himself published an elaborate and able defense of his course, addressed to the people of North Carolina. It had little effect upon the public mind, and he was never again in public life. The Whigs, it is needless to say, now expressed great admiration for him and used his treatment by the Democrats as a party text.

The election resulted in Graham's selection by a largely increased majority, 7,859 in a total vote of 78,113. The legislature was Whig in both branches. A very small vote was cast on the penitentiary proposition which was defeated.

The election was not well over before the Whigs revealed what was to be the chief part of their program, namely, the re-districting of the State. It was not popular with the people, but the leaders were bent on it. Whig leaders in fact were beginning to ignore the people's opinions to a considerable extent, feeling so secure that they failed to realize the danger of their course, and, in consequence, their day was nearing its end. They had always felt the same superiority, but they now were rather free in expressing it. They began to have a sense of ownership of the government, a most dangerous sign at all times, one usually boding ill for the people in the beginning, but in a democratic community presaging the inevitable doom of the party or at least of their leadership. They were progressive in actual policy as evidenced by their work of education and internal improvements, but in attitude, in theory, and in political practice, they were re-



actionary to a high degree. An example is to be found in a political incident of 1846. Governor Graham appointed Weston R. Gales, the editor of the *Register*, a member of the Literary Board. The *Standard* commented adversely and the *Register* at once rebuked Holden for presuming to interfere in a private matter. This was highly characteristic of the Whig attitude in general.

When the legislature met, Andrew Joyner was chosen speaker of the Senate over Louis D. Wilson, and Edward Stanly was elected in the House over D. W. Courts. A clean sweep was then made of all Democratic officials who could be ousted and Whigs replaced them. Whigs also at this time composed the Literary Board and Board of Internal Improvements. There was naturally considerable competition for the vacant senatorship. Badger, Morehead, Stanly, Clingman, J. W. Osborne, and William B. Shepard were all mentioned. Clingman was an open and avowed candidate and was present in Raleigh to look after his interest. The contest, however, was between Badger and Shepard and the former was selected by the caucus. He was accordingly elected over Asa Biggs. Mangum was re-elected over James J. McKay to whom the Democrats gave the honorary support.

Graham's message was largely devoted to questions of state finance. He urged an increase of the state revenue by an adequate assessment of lands and polls in the State and also recommended certain new taxes. He recommended assistance to the construction of certain roads and canals and reported his purchase for the State of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad. Through suggestion he recommended the re-districting of the State.

The work of the legislature may be summed up briefly. The State was re-divided up into new congressional districts with careful gerrymandering calculated to give the Whigs six certainly and possibly seven members. This was done under the lead of Rayner, and the Democrats coined the expression, "a Raynermander." The North and South Carolina, the Charlotte and South Carolina, the Roanoke, and the Wil-



mington and Manchester Railroads were chartered. Alexander, Gaston, and Polk counties were erected. Authority was given for the endorsement of the bonds of the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad to the amount of \$100,000, to redeem similar bonds to the same amount which had come due. Somewhat similar action was taken for the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad. A session of the Supreme Court to be held at Morganton once a year was provided for.

One action of the legislature excited particularly hostile criticism from the Democrats as well as from some Whigs. The troops that were being raised for the war lacked funds to equip them and to transport them to Charlotte or Wilmington, the points where they were mustered into the United States service. An appropriation of \$10,000 was accordingly moved. The Whigs would not let it pass until after long debate and bitter opposition from the Democrats they had inserted a preamble beginning with the words, "Whereas by the action the Executive and the subsequent sanction of Congress, this Republic is involved in a foreign war," which they felt made their position clear. Green W. Caldwell was captain of the company from Charlotte and when the news of this clause came to him and his men, they declined to receive any money under the resolution and finally disbanded. Caldwell was later appointed a captain in the United States army. Many of the troops as well as all the Democratic politicians were deeply offended by Governor Graham's conduct in relation to the field officers of the regiment which was sent. Passing over the volunteers who were mainly Democrats and a number of them with military training, he selected as colonel, Robert Paine, of Edenton, a bitter anti-war Whig; as lieutenant colonel, John A. Fagg of Buncombe, another of the same persuasion, neither of whom were volunteers but both of whom accepted. Montford Stokes of Surry, a Democrat trained at West Point and a volunteer, was appointed major. The overwhelming preference of the regiment itself for Louis D. Wilson, who was captain of one of the Edgecombe companies and it was for this reason that

the legislature, after placing the selection in the hands of the regiment, repealed the act and vested the appointment in the governor. Wilson was soon after appointed a colonel in the United States army and died in Mexico of yellow fever.

The later history of the regiment has certain interesting features. Paine proved himself to be a vain and petty tyrant who knew nothing of military matters and less about handling men. He won the hatred of the regiment immediately. In Mexico the feeling became very intense and finally he shot two of his men without justification, one of whom later died. He was at once arrested by Generals Wool and Cushing, but was later released probably in the interest of discipline. His officers petitioned him to resign and he charged two lieutenants, George E. P. Singletary and Joseph S. Pender, with inciting mutiny. General Wool gave to each a dishonorable dismissal, but they came to Washington and were both reinstated by the President. There can be no doubt that petty partisanship played a large part in the selection of officers for the regiment and in its command.

The congressional elections of 1847, in consequence of the gerrymander, resulted in the victory of the Whigs in six of the nine districts. Thomas L. Clingman came back in the first district, defeating John Gray Bynum, another Whig. In the second Nathaniel Boyden defeated Joseph M. Bogle, also a Whig. In the third D. M. Barringer was successful, the Democrats making no nomination but voting largely for W. F. Leak. A. H. Shepperd defeated J. L. Clemmons in the fourth. R. S. Donnell defeated W. K. Lane in the eighth, and in the ninth Asa Biggs, the incumbent, was retired in favor of David Outlaw. In the fifth, Abraham W. Venable, a Democrat, was elected over John Kerr, a Whig. In the sixth which was made a solid Democratic district, there was a many-sided contest. J. R. J. Daniel, the incumbent, received the convention nomination, but Archibald H. Arrington, also a member of Congress, M. T. Hawkins, a former member, Henry I. Toole, who called himself a Taylor Democrat, Dr. R. C. Pritchard, all Democrats, and Sidney Weller,

a Whig, were candidates. Hawkins and Weller withdrew in May and Pritchard in July but the others remained in the race. Daniel was elected. The new arrangement of the districts put James C. Dobbin and James J. McKay both in the seventh district and Dobbin declined to be a candidate against McKay, whom he thought entitled to re-election. McKay was opposed by Robert K. Bryan of New Hanover, an independent Democrat, and by William R. Hall of Brunswick, a Whig, but was re-elected.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1848

The campaign of 1848 was formally opened by the Whig convention which met February 22, but in reality the Democrats, animated by some new spirit, had begun it in the autumn of 1847. The convention representing twenty-eight counties with about one hundred and twenty delegates present was a different sort of body from what Whig conventions had usually been. It cannot be said that the delegates lacked confidence, but they were notably lacking in spirit.

Richard Hines was the president of the convention. The platform condemned the Polk Administration for the war which they pronounced "an unauthorized aggression upon the rights of a neighboring Nation." The delegates were much divided in their sympathies as to presidential candidates, and while the majority were still loyal to Clay in their heart some few favored Taylor and a smaller number still believed Scott the proper candidate. All, however, wanted to win regardless of platform or candidate. So after a series of resolutions, embodying the leading features of Clay's then recent Lexington speech, had been adopted, the convention endorsed Clay, Taylor and Scott. John Kerr was the Taylor leader in the convention and was chosen a delegate to the national convention as was John M. Morehead, who strongly favored the nomination of Clay.

The public and the convention itself was much in the dark as to a choice of a candidate for governor. Not so the group of Whig leaders in Raleigh. Many persons had been mentioned including Richard Hines, Andrew Joyner, Dr. F. J. Hill, John Kerr, Edward Stanly, James W. Bryan, Lewis Thompson, Josiah Collins, William B. Shepard, Kenneth Rayner, and David L. Swain. Rayner and Kerr had peremptorily refused to be considered. But none of these suited the plans of the leaders and to the great surprise of the State, Charles Manly, who was one of the well-known



Whigs who had not been mentioned in connection with the nomination, was chosen by the convention. This greatly displeased many Whigs, particularly in the East. They had felt that the nomination was due that section and they could not see why Manly should have been chosen. A number of the Whig papers were outspoken in their displeasure, the *North State*, published at Washington, going so far as to say that it had been brought about by a "nefarious plot of political jugglers." Others denied that Manly had any particular qualifications for the office, saying as did the Democrats that he was merely an office-holding lawyer. At the time of his nomination he was secretary of the University trustees, county attorney for Chatham, bank attorney, attorney for the Literary Board, attorney for a life insurance company, member of the Literary Board, and clerk of the House of Commons.

Manly was a native of Chatham and was born in 1795. Prepared for college by Mr. Bingham, he entered the University of North Carolina in 1811 and graduated in 1814. Upon his graduation he went to Raleigh as a tutor and studying law there was admitted to the bar. He served as reading clerk of the House of Commons for a number of years and in 1830 was elected chief clerk and, with one intermission, held the position for ten terms. In 1823 he was appointed clerk to the commission to settle claims under the Treaty of Ghent and served for one year. He had been for many years secretary of the trustees of the University. He was a presidential elector in 1840 and for a number of years was a member of the Whig central committee, part of the time being chairman. He was a man of great charm of manner, probably the most cordial of all the governors of the State, and was noted for his ability to entertain any group in which he might be thrown. He was really a man of considerable ability, but his propensity for rather slangy joking at all times prevented the fact from being generally recognized. He was in no sense progressive; in fact as compared to Morehead or Graham he was a reactionary.

The Democratic convention met on April 12. Weldon N. Edwards was president. Twenty-five counties sent one hundred and sixteen delegates. The platform prepared by the ready pen of William W. Holden, contained a strong endorsement of the administration's settlement with Mexico, of the independent treasury, of the tariff of 1846, and, in fact, of all the Democratic measures. Polk was also personally endorsed. It denounced the Whigs for encouraging the enemy in the late war and pronounced them guilty of moral treason, condemned the preamble of the war appropriation bill passed by the preceding legislature as well as the appointment of the regimental officers as opposed to election by the regiment. The increasing state debt called for more censure as did the redistricting of the State and, turning to national matters, the Wilmot Proviso. Weldon N. Edwards and Robert Strange were elected delegates to the national convention, with A. W. Venable and W. S. Ashe as alternates.

A number of men had been locally nominated for governor, most prominent of whom were Charles Fisher, D. W. Courts, Robert Strange and Walter F. Leak. The last named had published a long letter expressing his willingness to be the nominee, but declaring himself unalterably opposed to any personal canvass of the State.

The committee to choose a candidate had a very difficult time. Their choice, whoever he might be, seemed doomed to certain defeat and it was hard to select the best person to lead the forlorn hope. In the committee, Holden, R. P. Dick, W. K. Lane, and James B. Shepard urged the selection of David S. Reid of Rockingham. His name was finally presented to the convention and unanimously ratified.

The Democratic nominee was a native of Rockingham County and was born in 1813 and was thus only 35 years old, Manly being 53. His lack of years was one of the Whig charges against him in the campaign. He received only a common school education prior to his study of law and was never what might be called a learned lawyer. In fact his reputation rests upon his public career. He began this as a

member of the state Senate where he served from 1835 to 1841. In 1843 he was elected to Congress and served two terms until he was gerrymandered out of office. He was known as a hard campaigner, and as an exceedingly bold and fearless leader whose ability was excellent, whose judgment was almost unerring, and whose honesty and sincerity could not be doubted. In him the Democrats found the wisest, safest, and most resourceful political leader the party had from the time of Nathaniel Macon's prime to 1860.

A committee of the convention notified him of his nomination and to their horror he declined it. Holden had the letter in type and about to go to press, but, knowing it meant certain defeat for the party if published, he determined to hold it back. A consultation with several other Democrats resulted in the sending of a messenger on horseback, riding day and night, with a letter to Reid urging him to reconsider and, accepting the nomination, to come to Raleigh prepared to enter the campaign. Reid did accept and when he reached Raleigh had a long conference with his friends on the subject of the campaign. With Dr. Josiah Watson, James B. Shepard, W. W. Holden, Perrin Busbee, Jerry Nixon, W. T. Rogers and Mark Williams present he said: "Gentlemen, this nomination was not sought by me, and it has been my purpose for a long time if I should be a candidate for a State office before the people, to broach one issue, which I deem very important. What I mean is that the state constitution shall be so amended by the mode prescribed by that instrument itself, that all voters for the House of Commons shall be allowed to vote for senators. What do you say to my taking this ground in the canvass? I mean, of course, no disrespect to the convention that nominated me, but I wish to discuss this question before the people. I want your opinion. I will consult our friend, Dr. S. A. Andrews at Goldsborough, and friend Samuel R. Street at Newbern, and friends at Beaufort, and then I will decide what I will do."

Holden's later accounts of his part in the selection of the issue vary. In his memoirs he says that Watson, Shepard,



and Busbee were inclined to decide against broaching it and that he, Nixon, Rogers and Williams favored it. In the campaign he declared that he favored the change but had doubts of the wisdom of bringing it forward in this campaign but had nevertheless pledged his support to it. This is probably the correct account. Some years later he declared that he had urged its being made the issue. It has been frequently suggested that Douglas while in the State had proposed it to Reid as a good campaign proposition. But Douglas denied it as did Reid and Holden and there is no reason to believe that anyone but Reid was responsible. It was no new suggestion as has already been seen.

The first joint debate of the candidates was held at New Bern on May 10. Manly devoted his entire time to the late war and other national questions. Reid in his speech replied briefly to Manly and then avowed his belief that a change in the constitution was necessary. He called his proposition "free suffrage," a good campaign title which won immediate favor. He discussed the question at length giving his reasons for it and showing the absurdity of the existing arrangement. Manly was called upon for reply, but saying that the proposition was a complete surprise to him, he was not prepared to express himself upon it then but would do so the next day at Beaufort. When he replied then he condemned it as a new issue sprung upon him and upon the people with no public demand behind it and declared his entire opposition to it and pleaded that the principle engrafted on the constitution by the fathers for the security and protection of the landed interest should be preserved. "As well," said he, "abolish the Senate as extend the privilege of voting for senators to those who have no land." He also expressed his fear of a convention. Reid was prepared for this, for he recognized the timidity of the people as to any changes in the established system, and so he endorsed the legislative method of amendment.

Most of the Whig papers at first opposed free suffrage and then many tried to ignore it. A few from the beginning



admitted that it would do little harm if adopted. The *Register* naturally attacked it, pronouncing it demagoguery of the worst type. The usual term with which the Whigs attempted to damn it was "agrarianism." A characteristic opposition editorial appeared in the *Wilmington Commercial*, part of which follows:

Among the measures which follow in the train of free suffrage, or rather among those which are advocated by the movers of this scheme, is the desecration of the Bible and the abolition of matrimony. This is the consummation so ardently desired, by Jacobins in politics and levellers in sociology; they go hand in hand in the work; whatever restrains the passions, or curbs the ardor of political proscription, is hostile to the feelings and designs of both.

It is a distinguished feature in those monstrosities, that while they assume the largest liberty for themselves, they have the very smallest regard for the rights of others. The command "Thou shalt not steal," comes in the way of the taxing the property of the landholder without his consent. "Thou shalt not covet," is adverse to the equal division of property. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," is against the abolition of matrimony, and the cherished licentiousness of the levellers; and "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," scatters all the doctrines of the whole tribe, to the winds. So that before this "progression" can be brought to its grand climacteric, the Bible must be put away, as behind the "spirit of the age," in its doctrines and admonitions.

We believe the Democratic leaders are at fault in this pursuit. They never can induce the sober, thinking people of North Carolina to hazard the violation of the principles of republican government, and take a step which may lead to the removal from the Ark of the great Charter of temporal and eternal blessedness and hope; and to trample beneath the feet of deriding licentiousness the banner of the Cross, under the influence of which we have so long and so gloriously prospered, and through the counsels of which our institutions were reared.

This has a familiar ring even today.

Towards the end of the campaign many Whigs weakened and a large number openly favored the amendment, particularly in the Whig stronghold of the West. This was so apparent that some Whig papers condemned the Democrats for introducing it into the realm of party politics, saying that it was not and, from its very nature, ought not to be a party question. This was a not uncharacteristic point of view. In the view of many of the Whigs, nothing which touched deeply the whole people of the State should be brought forward by a party—if that party was the Democratic. As a matter of fact the Democratic party deserves eternal praise for finally centering the attention of the State upon a real state issue, unconnected with any national matter and touching only North Carolina. In many ways it transformed the State.

The Democratic rank and file accepted free suffrage gladly. It was good Democratic doctrine, it “took” with the people regardless of politics, it alarmed the Whigs, and it promised victory. And like the Whigs, the Democrats wanted victory. Holden threw himself into the fight, ably supplementing Reid’s really magnificent campaigning, and the *Standard* was full of strong arguments for the change. It was easy to find arguments. North Carolina was the only State in the Union which had such a distinction between the voters for the two houses and, in addition, it had not any real reason for existence. On the stump Manly with his slangy humorous speeches vainly attempted to force the fighting to the war issue, and, failing in that, to some other national question. Reid made no attempt to imitate Manly’s characteristic methods but in a mood of stern seriousness, remembering the mental and political habits of the people, fostered and encouraged for many years by leaders who did not want them to be too much interested in state affairs, he answered briefly and spiritedly the national arguments of his opponent and devoted the major part of his time to the issue which touched the State.

The Democrats were finding themselves. The *Standard*

carried the following at the head of its editorial page which is indicative of the new progressive spirit which was manifesting itself in the party:

OUR FLAG IS THERE

The Independent Treasury, and no National bank.

The tariff of 1846.

The United States against Mexico—No “aid and comfort” to the enemy.

Indemnity in Territory from Mexico, and no Wilmot Proviso.

Sound, specie-paying State banks, with the individual liability clause, and honestly and impartially conducted.

A safe, prudent, and judicious system of Internal Improvements, with justice to all parts of the State.

Our Common School System, improved and amended, and the right of every boy and girl in the State to an education.

A thorough Reform in the Administration of the Government of North Carolina.

Free Suffrage—or the right of every freeman in the State, who pays his taxes, to vote for members of both branches of the General Assembly.

We have thrown our flag to the winds, with our principles clearly and boldly inscribed upon it; and we now call upon the Whig presses to come forward and inform the people of North Carolina what they are for and what they are against. Let them speak out at once, if they intend to speak at all for the August elections are near at hand.

It must not be supposed that because a state question was uppermost in the minds of everyone that national affairs played no part in the campaign. They played a large part and to the advantage of the Democrats. Just at this time the Federal Whigs were distinctly in the ascendant and while no one in the State quarreled with their Union proclivities, the Democrats and many Whigs were deeply dissatisfied with their views and conduct in relation to the slavery question. The Whig press had bitterly attacked the Wilmot Proviso, partly, it must be confessed, because it was

introduced by a Democrat. The *Register*, for example, had said :

The unanimity with which the members of both parties from the non-slaveholding States have supported this slavery restriction proviso convinces us that we have no right to expect justice at the hands of either. It behooves the whole South, then, to cast about, and decidedly and unflinchingly resist any and every project which must inevitably tend to advance the unholy and mischievous purposes of those who have openly and willingly violated the Missouri Compromise. . . . It is time for party distinctions to sleep, and for the South to present a united front.

As the *Register* was the party organ this might be supposed to be an authoritative statement of party opinion. But the party did not live up to the doctrines here expressed and the Whig platform ignored the whole matter. The Democrats were not slow to say what was really the truth that this omission was due to the fact that the party was led by the anti-slavery Northern element, committed to hostility to slavery, and that the North Carolina Whigs were attempting to keep on good terms with them so as to win a party victory even at the price of surrendering somewhat of their opinions. A rift was apparent among the Whigs, foreshadowing the large secession from the party which was to take place in the early years of the following decade. Badger admitted the right of Congress to legislate for the territories concerning slavery. This was the view which North Carolinians generally had previously held. But Mangum denied emphatically the correctness of the doctrine. Badger also in order to prevent the rise of vexing questions, was opposed to the acquisition of any territory from Mexico and voted against the treaty of peace although he considered the war iniquitous. Mangum voted for it. Boyden favored the surrender of all claims against Mexico and wanted to surrender a part of Texas. Barringer in 1846 had voted that the war was brought on by the act of Mexico, but in 1848 he voted that the war was brought on unconstitutionally



and unnecessarily by President Polk. In the Summer of 1848 Mangum, Barringer, Shepperd, Clingman, and Outlaw with the three Democratic members of Congress, voted for the Clayton Compromise: Badger, Boyden, and Donnell voted against it. Clingman was waking to a knowledge and comprehension of the strength of the anti-slavery movement in the North and was beginning to attempt to secure a union of Northern and Southern Whigs on some common ground which would stop the agitation and save the party. He favored the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific.

John M. Morehead was president of the Whig National convention. The delegation was much divided in sentiment as appears from their vote.

*First Ballot*—Taylor, 6; Clay, 5.

*Second Ballot*—Taylor, 6; Clay 5.

*Third Ballot*—Taylor, 7; Clay, 3; Scott, 1.

*Fourth Ballot*—Taylor, 10; Clay, 1.

North Carolina Whigs, as has been said, 'really wanted Clay, but they wanted above everything else to win, and Taylor was accepted with sincerity and enthusiasm. His being a Southerner and a slaveholder seemed to them, too, to guarantee a cessation of the anti-slavery agitation. It is said on apparently good authority that Kenneth Rayner was offered the second place on the ticket and declined. But there is no contemporary evidence of this offer.

In the Democratic national convention the North Carolina delegation agreed informally to support James Buchanan and James J. McKay. When the balloting began they cast the first and second ten votes for Buchanan and one for Levi Woodbury, after which they voted for Cass. McKay's candidacy for the vice-presidency aroused no interest and he received only two votes from other delegations.

The state and national campaigns were pushed by both parties. Each side had naturally much condemnation for the other's candidates. The Whigs were loud in their assertions that Cass was not entirely sound in his views on slavery and

in their hearts many Democrats agreed with them that such a thing was only too possible. The Democrats were equally loud in their pronouncements as to Taylor's unfitness and of Fillmore's abolitionist views. Both sides were affected. Cass was looked upon with suspicion by Democrats and Whigs began to fear that Northern influence in the party boded ill for the South and slavery. The Southern Whigs were badly out of touch with the other wing of the party and only the reassuring facts in connection with Taylor already alluded to kept them line. They began to feel that it might be well for the individual State to look to united action at home and this combined with the popularity of Reid's program greatly weakened the party in the state election. Only the power of the strong organization prevented their defeat in the Summer elections.

Manly was elected by the slender majority of 854 in a total of 84,218. The Democrats had made a net gain of ten counties. The legislature was tied in both houses. From the standpoint of Democratic prospects at the beginning of the campaign it was really a victory, and they so regarded it. Free suffrage of course was chiefly responsible.

The presidential campaign waxed as the gubernatorial contest waned. An interesting and really highly significant fact of the campaign was the holding of free soil meetings in several places in the State and the selection of a Van Buren electoral ticket which received in the election forty-seven votes in Guilford, sixteen in Orange and thirteen in Chatham. It was the last public expression of anti-slavery sentiment in the State for some time. Public feeling was strongly favorable to slavery, and the growing minority which hated it with increasing hatred was a silent element in the population of the State.

Taylor carried the November election by 8,154 in a total vote of 81,280. North Carolina Democrats in common with many other Southern Democrats had failed to do their part, and Taylor's vote in the South is significant because of the proof it furnishes of the growing sectional feeling. A

Southerner and a slaveholder, albeit a Whig, he was more acceptable to a certain class of Southern Democrats than a man of their own party who had even won the title later so opprobrious in the North of "a Northern man with Southern principles."

The campaign of 1848, the last accompanied by complete Whig victory, saw the Democratic party alert and progressive, ready to take control of the State. It was committed to public education and largely committed to internal improvements. The *Standard*, the very best indicator of Democratic sentiment, took a strong favorable position at the close of the campaign for both and the last obstacle to Democratic success before the people was thus removed.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE LEGISLATURE OF 1848

The session of the General Assembly which met in November, 1848, will always stand out in North Carolina as one of the most important in the history of the State, if indeed it may not be regarded as the one of chief importance. In its accomplishment for the State and in its debates were visible the changes which were steadily being wrought in the very fabric of the commonwealth. It is hard to associate it with those predecessors of which Swain was so justly critical; in fact there was little similarity in spirit, since in this later period the State and its people were steadily and rapidly being re-made.

As has already been noted, the legislature in both houses was evenly divided between the two parties after the election. Several vacancies occurred before the meeting, but the special elections made no change in the relative standing of the two parties. At the opening, the Democrats offered to yield the speakership of the House of Commons, if the Whigs would yield in the Senate. The Whigs contemptuously refused, arguing that since they had elected the governor the Democrats ought to concede both positions to them. In the Senate they nominated Andrew Joyner and the Democrats selected Calvin Graves. In the House Robert B. Gilliam and James C. Dobbin were respectively the Whig and Democratic nominees. Organization was deferred in both houses until the third day when the Democrats withdrew Dobbin's name, allowing the Whigs to elect Gilliam. The Whigs still refused to yield, but on the sixth day they offered to compromise and let Graves be elected if the Democrats would agree to make no changes in the clerks. This was agreed to, and of the eight lesser positions the Whigs retained five.

After organization, the election of a United States senator claimed all the attention of the members who spent most of their time caucusing and scheming. Badger was the regular



Whig candidate, but many Whigs did not like him, and his attitude on the slavery question and the war had alienated the strongly pro-slavery Whigs. Nothing was needed to alienate the Democrats who as a rule detested him. They had small hope of electing a Senator by a regular nomination so they made none and hoped for some stroke of good fortune which might enable them to defeat the will of their opponents. As to Badger, they yielded not at all.

The Whigs claimed that since the State had voted for Taylor that the Democrats had no moral or even legal right to oppose the Whig choice for senator, and, fearing the certain deadlock might be prolonged until the end of the session, they finally introduced into the Senate the following resolution which was defeated by a party vote, one member being absent:

Whereas, this is a Government in which all political power is vested in and derived from the people;

Whereas, it is the manifest duty of Representatives to carry out strictly the known wishes of their constituents in the discharge of all their elective duties;

Whereas, the free people of this State have recently, at the ballot box, declared their political preference in a voice which their representative agents ought not to slight or disregard;

Whereas, respectful deference on the part of the minority for the will of the majority, when legally and constitutionally expressed, is true republicanism;

And, whereas, all delay and management, under pretense, however fair and imposing, the object of which is to defeat the will of the people thus expressed, are contrary to the spirit and genius of the Government;

Resolved, That a message be sent to the House of Commons, proposing that the two houses, on Tuesday next, at 12 o'clock, proceed to the election of a United States Senator.

As the balloting proceeded, the Democrats began to throw a good deal of their strength to Clingman, who was most anxious for the election. He was deeply dissatisfied with Badger's views; he was growing to have the same feeling of

hopelessness about the Whig party. A committee of Democrats asked him for an expression of his political views and in December he replied that he was opposed to the establishment of a national bank, opposed to the repeal of the Walker tariff, although he favored certain modifications of it, and that he was opposed to the Wilmot Proviso as wrong in principle and, in addition, unconstitutional. This satisfied the Democrats. The deadlock continued for some time but finally Badger won enough votes to receive the necessary majority and was elected.

There was a long contest over the election of a Supreme Court judge to succeed Judge Daniel who had died during the year. The governor and council had appointed William H. Battle and had filled his place on the Superior bench by the appointment of Augustus Moore. B. F. Moore had been appointed attorney-general to succeed Edward Stanly who had resigned to become a member of the legislature, service in the hurly-burly of some sort of legislative chamber having become almost a necessity to his fiery soul. The legislature at once confirmed the appointment of the two Moores, but after a long contest Battle was defeated by Richmond M. Pearson, the Democrats supporting Strange. Battle was then voted for to succeed Pearson on the Superior bench, but John W. Ellis of Rowan, a member of the House, was chosen. The retirement of Ellis from the legislature had an important bearing upon the later action of the legislature. These two elections were brought about by an agreement between several Whigs and Democrats to end the contests by exchanging votes, the latter voting for Pearson and the former for Ellis.

The free suffrage issue of the preceding campaign found its echo in a resolution for a constitutional amendment introduced into the House by James Sheek of Surry. This, after a hard filibuster by the Whigs and the rejection of a substitute proposed by Rayner, providing for a convention, passed its second reading by a vote of 75 to 26, 28 Whigs voting for the measure and five Democrats against it. It passed its

third reading by a vote of 75 to 21. The Whigs thus apparently gave up the fight, and Democratic success in 1850 was practically assured. The resolution went to the Senate and was discussed at length there. It received a majority, 25 to 19, but did not get the three-fifths vote necessary for a constitutional amendment on its passage through its first legislature.

Very early in the session, Walter L. Steele of Richmond, a Whig, introduced a series of resolutions on the subject of slavery, which declared the territories the common property of the States, denied to Congress any power to prohibit any citizen from carrying into them his property in slaves, a property guaranteed by the Constitution, and asserted that the only conditions which the Constitution imposed upon a State for admission into the Union was that its own Constitution should be republican in form. They denied the principle of the Missouri Compromise, but offered to accept its extension as a compromise. The resolutions expressed devotion to the Union. Many of the Whigs were opposed to these, regarding them as a thrust at Badger, the *Register* saying that they were "tomfoolery" and the work of "political mountebanks," but almost as many considered them as entirely proper, eminently timely, if indeed not rendered absolutely necessary by the national situation. After many Whig amendments, designed to weaken or discredit the resolutions, had been voted down by a combination of both parties the resolutions were referred to a committee of which James C. Dobbin was chairman and a substitute was reported by it which differed very little from the original. These passed their second and third readings practically without opposition. In the Senate they were introduced by William B. Shepard, the best representative of the strongly pro-Southern, pro-slavery Whigs of the East who were not at all behind the Democrats in their suspicion and dislike of the North and in their insistence upon proper guarantees of Southern rights. The resolutions were scarcely opposed at all in the Senate. But while there was little open opposition

it was only because no Whig wanted thus to go on record. They sought in many ways to discredit the resolutions and spread the report that if they were passed Badger would resign. It is needless to say that their adoption led to no such result.

These purely political questions having been settled, let us now look at the constructive work by which this legislature is best known. A significant fact was the governor's devoting his entire message to state affairs. He again recommended improvements in the system of assessment and taxation, showing conclusively that both were bad. His argument for internal improvements was a powerful one. In it he said:

In surveying our Territory, with an eye to the present interests and wants of the people, I am more than ever impressed with our destitution of facilities for cheap and speedy transportation. In this regard, however unpleasant may be the admission, I am forced to the conviction, that we labor under greater disadvantages than any State in the Union. And we never can be equal competitors with their citizens in our agriculture, the predominant pursuit among us, until these disadvantages are in a great degree overcome. The man who is obliged to transport in wagons over no better roads than ours, a distance varying from 60 to 250 miles, at the speed of 25 miles per day, can no more contend for profits with him who has the advantage of railroads or good navigation, than can the spinning wheel with the cotton mill. Had we ever been in a more favorable situation in this respect, and had the impediments which now beset us been imposed by human powers, no sacrifice would be esteemed too great to effect our deliverance and restore our prosperity.

His general argument contained a recommendation for a road from Raleigh to Charlotte by way of Salisbury, the benefits of which he stated as follows:

It is commended to us as a great North Carolina improvement, appealing to our interest and State pride, by arguments which it were almost criminal to overlook. First, it



would open to the market of the world an extensive region of the State, reaching from the Capitol almost to the Blue Ridge, of great fertility and capacity for indefinite improvement, by reason of its agricultural, mineral, and manufacturing resources; containing in the counties within 25 miles of the most direct route, more than 230,000 souls; and within 50 miles, more than one-half of our whole population, who are far removed from places of trade, and dependent entirely on the common wagon and common road for all their transportation. The occasion will not permit me to dwell on its numberless benefits in this regard, which will readily occur to any one who looks on the map of the State, with the eye of a statesman and patriot. Second, it would add incalculably to the business and value of one at least, (and ultimately of both) of our present railroads in which the State has so deep an interest, and make them productive stocks. Third, it would unite the middle and eastern with the western section of the State, in a domestic trade and exchange of productions too cumbersome for the present mode of conveyance beside facilitating travel for health and social intercourse. Fourth, by running over the most practicable routes from Raleigh to Salisbury, and thence turning southwestward to Charlotte, it would bisect the State for more than a hundred miles, bringing the most remote on either side within 50 miles of the railroad, and would be in a favorable location for being extended still further west, from the former places, and to connect advantageously by means of turnpike roads with the northwestern part of our territory.

He also thought that later branches might be built to Goldsboro and Fayetteville and that the road might buy the Raleigh and Gaston road. Concerning the crying shame of the State's lack of care for the insane he urged reform. Miss Dix was at this time in the State and had lately been travelling over it. Of her he said:

A distinguished person of the gentler sex, who has devoted much of her life to the pious duty of pleading the cause of the lunatic, before States and communities, has recently traversed a considerable part of this State in search of information respecting these unfortunates among us, and will probably

ask leave to present their case to you at an early date. I cannot too earnestly commend the cause itself, or the disinterested benevolence of its advocate.

Before taking up the railroad legislation it is well to mention that the first bill passed by the legislature was the one creating the State Hospital for the Insane. Miss Dix, accompanied by Governor Swain, was heard by the legislature, a fact rather remarkable in North Carolina of that day, but the bill failed to pass its second reading. It was later reconsidered upon motion of James C. Dobbin, fresh from the death-bed of his wife and fulfilling her dying request, who made the great speech of the session and won the day, the bill passing by a vote of 101 to 10. Provision was made for the erection of a first rate building and a special tax was levied on land and poll for the space of four years to pay for it.

With the passage of this bill the friends of progress drew a breath of relief. There was reason; its passage was really epochal in the State's history. It had no real connection with the railroad measures, but it had a very important effect upon them. Up to this time the proposition for a central railroad had gained little ground, the chief reason being that the Charlotte and South Carolina Railroad had offered to run their line from Charlotte to Danville with only a "naked" charter without state aid of any sort. Quite naturally the members of the legislature from Mecklenburg to Rockingham were all in favor of the project which was in the immediate charge of John W. Ellis, who introduced the bill. The chief opposition came from Edward Stanly, who occupied a very strong position in the entire discussion, since his section was not directly affected by any of the measures proposed, but who strongly favored any system which would build up North Carolina. He announced his intention of fighting the "Danville Connection" which he called the "Danville Sale." "But," said he, "the friends of this South Carolina and Virginia bondage were not to blame so long as the North Carolina Assembly failed to give her people a real

North Carolina system. This failing, I, too, go for Danville."

A bill embodying Governor Graham's plan had been introduced but had apparently no possible chance of passing. As soon as the hospital bill was passed the calendar was crowded with bills for canals, plank roads, turnpikes, short line railroads, law reforms, rights of married women, and every conceivable thing, but no one dared to champion a complete central system until W. S. Ashe undertook to formulate a bill. Ignoring their Raleigh and Gaston project and paying as little attention to Beaufort Harbor and Ducktown copper, the bill provided for the subscription by the State for \$2,000,000 of the total \$3,000,000 stock in the North Carolina Railroad to run from Goldsboro to Charlotte. The bill was introduced but it made no progress until the friends of the Danville Connection renewed the fight. But Ellis had been elected a judge and his leadership was missed. Finally Stanly, who had been taunting the advocates of the bill, said that they had sold out to Virginia and South Carolina, referring to Richmond as only a "Great Slave Mart," and to Charleston as "surviving solely on pretensions." Rufus Barringer then offered to throw the strength of the Danville Connection to any bill which provided for a general North Carolina system. The offer was accepted, the Danville Connection bill was tabled and the bill embodying Graham's suggestions and which had a favorable place on the calendar, was amended by substituting after the enacting clause the Ashe bill. It was rejected by a vote of 49 to 56, but reconsidered, and, on January 18, 1849, passed by a vote of 60 to 52. Barringer tells the rest of the story better than anyone of this generation could. Said he:

The chances in the Senate were all in doubt. That body was Democratic; and up to this time, no special effort had been made to draw the old ship from its Jeffersonian moorings. And such men as Henry W. Conner, John H. Drake, A. B. Hawkins, John Berry, George Bower, W. D. Bethel, George W. Thompson, and John Walker were hard to lead

and could not be driven. And above them all sat Speaker Calvin Graves, a recognized force from a county just under the nose of Danville, and devoted to Richmond. The speaker was tall, angular, and singularly ugly in feature; but his character was high; he was strictly impartial, and with all courtesies in bearing. From first to last no one could divine a leaning either way. But now a mighty effort was made to teach these born men of the plow and of the people a new tenet of republican faith, an awakening to what the State owed the public. Judge Romulus M. Saunders and W. W. Holden both stepped forward and made strong appeals for the new departure. But all to no purpose. And then some of the Whigs, left out by the Ashe bill, stood aloof. From these and other causes, it was seen from day to day, in all the preliminary skirmishes, as also in the final struggle, the result would be very close, and that all might hang on the "Baptist Enigma," Calvin Graves.

By consent, the first and second readings were chiefly formal, to get the measure in shape, and to secure all sides and parties a just showing. This was after the old style, quiet North Carolina way, when, as a hundred years before, Dissenters and Churchmen were alike honoring King, Queen and Royal Governor by naming towns, counties and mountain peaks after them, but at the same time, solemnly resolved to hurl them instantly from power "if they did not do exactly the fair thing." So here, every courtesy was shown opposing parties and interests until January 25, when the bill came regularly up, after full debate, and was put on its third and final reading. The Senate chamber was packed with visitors and strangers from all quarters to see the fate of the momentous struggle, now so full of weal or woe to the dear "Old North State," and which might settle here once for all the mighty effort to awake North Carolina from the long sleep of her death-like "Rip-Van-Winkleism."

Speaker Graves calmly announced: "The bill to charter the North Carolina Railroad Company and for other purposes is now upon its third reading. Is the Senate ready for the question?" Feeble responses said, "Question." The roll call began; and as feared nearly every Democrat voted "No." The tally was kept by hundreds, and when the clerk



announced 22 yeas and 22 nays, there was an awful silence. The slender form of Speaker Graves stood up, and leaning slightly forward, with gavel in hand, he said: "The vote on the bill being equal, 22 yeas and 22 nays, the chair votes 'Yea.' The bill has passed its third and last reading."

The railroad and hospital bills were not the only progressive measures passed. The deaf and dumb institution was reorganized, the Fayetteville and Western Plank Road Company chartered to build a road from Fayetteville to Salisbury, the State taking three-fifths of the stock; the Raleigh and Gaston re-incorporated with a provision in the charter that when half a million dollars should have been spent on the road by the stockholders it should be released from all liability to the State, and state aid was given for an extension to Weldon; bonds of the Wilmington and Raleigh to the amount of a quarter of a million dollars were endorsed; and provision was made for the improvement of the Cape Fear and Deep Rivers above Fayetteville, the State taking stock to the amount of \$40,000. Other legislation worthy of note were acts protecting the property rights of married women, revising the revenue system, laying off the counties of Alamance, Watauga and Forsyth, and one repealing the act creating the county of Polk. The growing activity of the abolitionists resulted in the passage of an act making the stealing of a slave or the enticement of one to leave the master a capital offense. The governor was instructed to issue an annual Thanksgiving proclamation. This act met with much condemnation from many of the Baptists of the State, who declared it the beginning of a union of Church and State.

Surely nothing need be said to prove that the State had entered upon a new era. Much of the credit for the awakening must be given to Reid and his free suffrage issue. A state issue had been needed for years, and now when it came, it had the same effect that the reform issue of the thirties had. The State was shaken from Murphy to Manteo, and "Rip Van Winkle" was at last awake.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1850

The year 1849 in North Carolina, as elsewhere in the United States, was one of shifting political opinion, angry discussion, and doubtful and uneasy watching. Slavery was suddenly the theme of every agitator, North and South, and to many thoughtful patriots it seemed as if the sad day was really approaching when the Union would be severed. The congressional elections were heatedly contested, but the Whigs retained their majority of the delegation. Clingman won in the first without Democratic opposition; in fact he was so rapidly coming to the Democratic position that the Whigs were his most likely opponents. Joseph P. Caldwell was elected in the second over Mr. Hill, a Democrat, who ran without party nomination. There was a sharp contest in the third where Green W. Caldwell, the Democratic candidate, faced Alfred Dockery, Alexander Little, and S. P. Ingram. His chances seemed excellent when Edmund Deberry came out and was triumphantly re-elected. In the fourth A. H. Shepperd was again returned, defeating Doctor Keen. In the eighth James W. Bryan was nominated by the Whigs, but soon withdrew; and Edward Stanly took his place and defeated W. K. Lane. In the ninth David Outlaw defeated Thomas J. Person. The three Democratic districts all had contests. Henry K. Nash tried conclusions with A. W. Venable and was defeated. W. J. Clarke, a Democrat, unsuccessfully opposed J. R. J. Daniel in the sixth, and McKay, declining to run again after fourteen years' consecutive service, was succeeded by W. S. Ashe who defeated David Reid, another New Hanover Democrat.

When Congress met, the attention of the whole State was riveted on Washington. But while Congress was discussing Clay's proposed compromise there was considerable interest in political quarters in the various Southern proposals that were made to force just action. In the press the line was

fairly clear, the Democratic papers, headed by the *Standard*, taking the position that there should be official action by the Southern States in unison to oppose anything less than the full demands of the section, while the Whig press, led by the *Register*, opposed such action and favored compromise in Congress. Individual Whigs in large numbers took the full Southern position and accepted Democratic leadership. The proposed Nashville Convention aroused the ire of the Federal Whigs, but the Democrats almost unanimously endorsed it. The Democratic papers urged Governor Manly to call a special session of the legislature to approve the plan and elect delegates, or, in default of that, to call the council together to take official action or to issue a proclamation on the subject. He would not consider the suggestions and the State was not officially represented in the convention. Almost all the Whig papers denounced it as a disunion gathering, the *Star* alone insisting that it had a most worthy purpose, and thus bringing down upon itself the denunciation of the *Register* and the Federal Whigs. Stanly and John Kerr were fiercely denouncing it in public addresses, while in the southeastern part of the State so-called Southern Rights conventions were being held at which fiery resolutions were adopted with great enthusiasm. The Whig attitude was caused by a genuine fear of anything which might endanger the Union. "Certainly not," wrote Badger to Crittenden, "for the privilege of carrying slaves to California, or of keeping up private gaols by slave dealers in this district [District of Columbia]". And Badger was never more right. He and Mangum exerted an important influence upon the passage of the Compromise by keeping Webster in the notion of his famous Seventh of March Speech which he delivered only because of their urging and after he had changed his mind several times. They also kept him in line in the later voting. Mangum was not on particularly good terms with the administration and took a much more pronounced Southern position than did Badger. But the latter's speech in March on the slavery question satisfied even the *Standard* which was ever critical of his opinions and actions.

The votes of the North Carolina delegation in Congress on the compromise measure were somewhat indicative of the lines of division of opinion. No vote was recorded in the Senate on the Utah or Fugitive Slave bills. Neither Mangum nor Badger voted on the California Bill. Both voted against the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia and both voted for the New Mexico Bill. On the Texas Bill Mangum was paired with no indication of his preference and Badger voted affirmatively. In the House, Ashe, Caldwell, Deberry, Outlaw, Shepperd, and Stanly voted for the Utah Bill and none opposed it. Caldwell and Stanly voted for the admission of California and Ashe, Clingman, Daniel, Deberry, Outlaw, Shepperd, and Venable voted against it. Caldwell, Deberry, Outlaw, Shepperd, and Stanly voted for the New Mexico Bill and Ashe, Clingman, Daniel and Venable, against it. Every member of the delegation voted for the Fugitive Slave Law. Ashe, Deberry, Caldwell, Clingman, Outlaw, and Venable voted against the abolition of the slave trade in the District and none of the delegation voted for it.

The address to the Southern people issued by the Southern members of Congress was signed by Mangum, Clingman, Venable, and Ashe. Clingman had now completely lost the support of the *Register* and all the Federal Whigs, but Democratic sentiment had changed in the same ratio as that of their opponents and the *Standard* and other Democratic papers were already expressing full approval of his views of slavery and the tariff. His relations with his fellow Whigs in Congress were strained, and he and Stanly, after a long period of ill-feeling, finally in March came to blows in the House. Stanly and Inge of Alabama, fought a duel in February.

Secession sentiment was strong in certain parts of the South and the question began to be discussed in the North Carolina papers. The *Standard* rather featured these discussions, taking strong ground on the subject in defense of the abstract right, and urging the possible necessity. This



view was combatted by the Whig press, and in August Badger attacked the theory in the Senate in one of his strongest speeches. The North Carolina Democrats in the main disliked the compromise, and their feeling on the subject directed their thoughts to the secession question though there was little or no inclination on the part of any responsible person in the State to resort at the time to any such remedy.

In July, William A. Graham was appointed secretary of the navy by President Fillmore. This position and that of minister to Spain were all that the North Carolina Whigs received from the administration, except inside the State. Barringer and Stanly were aspirants for the Spanish post and the former received it. It was hinted at the time that Mangum was also casting his eye in the same direction, but there is no evidence that this was the case and it was probably untrue. In the State there was a clean sweep of the Democrats from federal office. The Whigs had claimed in the campaign that there would be no recourse to the spoils system, and that the office holders would remain undisturbed unless there was more against them than their politics; but no such thing was possible at that time any more than it is to-day.

The state campaign had been eagerly looked forward to by the Democrats since the election of 1848. In 1849 Holden wrote to Reid asking him to be a candidate again. Reid consented on the condition that he should not be required to approve the Nashville Convention and the chartering of the North Carolina Railroad. Holden told him that he need not commit himself on either question, and that they were both outside and above party. In 1850 a Democratic caucus was held in Raleigh at which Reid was nominated. John S. Eaton presided. Asa Biggs offered a resolution to amend the constitution so as to forbid any appropriation for internal improvements unless it was approved by the people at the polls. Intense excitement followed with threats from the friends of internal improvements of breaking up the party, and Biggs withdrew his motion. After this there was scat-

tered Democratic opposition to internal improvements but never again was there party opposition.

Reid's name recurred in the resolutions adopted by county meetings, but others were mentioned, notably James C. Dobbin in the East. W. F. Leak was again a candidate and was now willing to canvass the State. There was really quite a good deal of opposition to Reid and in May he wrote a public letter declining to run again because the party was not united on him. In the letter he urged free suffrage as the issue on which the party would win. No Whig candidate other than Manly was mentioned, but there was much quiet opposition to him in the party. It was nevertheless clear that he would be the nominee.

The Whig convention met on June 10. James T. Morehead presided. The convention was addressed by John Kerr, then making quite a reputation in the party as an orator because of his fiery denunciation of the Democrats in general and Reid in particular, Henry W. Miller, W. H. Rhodes, and, after his nomination, by Manly, who paid high tribute to the so-called "Raleigh Clique" of Whigs, saying among other things that "if the locofoco city of Sodom had had such a group it would have been saved." This expression excited so much anger among the Democrats that in the printed speech it was changed. The platform endorsed the principles of the party, expressed devotion for the Union, and demanded an adjustment of the slavery question. It also expressed full approval of the compromise measures and gave Taylor a hearty endorsement. On the question of free suffrage it "straddled" as it did on a new Democratic doctrine which some of the Whigs were trying to seize, namely, the election of judges by the people for a term of years. On these two questions, the platform said the sense of the people should be taken since they had a right to alter the fundamental law if they wished. Manly had already announced his continued opposition to the change of system. By this plank of their platform the Whigs deprived themselves of any possibility of united action. Their adoption of it was

entirely characteristic of the party which found it difficult if not impossible to take a position and be ready to fail rather than abandon it.

The Democratic convention assembled on June 13. Thirty-eight counties had delegates present. Asa Biggs was temporary chairman and Robert Strange president. Speeches were made by R. M. Saunders, W. J. Clarke, Duncan K. McRae, and James G. Shepherd. Reid was unanimously nominated. The platform condemned Taylor's administration, expressed devotion to the Union, the existence of which it declared threatened by the situation in national affairs. Declining to concede the right of Congress to legislate on slavery in the territories, it expressed the willingness of the party to abide by the terms and spirit of the Missouri Compromise. It closed with a strong declaration for free suffrage and the popular election of judges for a term of years. This last change had first been urged in the State by Holden in the *Standard* and had met with considerable favor with both parties. Reid accepted the nomination and immediately issued an address to the people of the State in which he discussed the issues in a bold, straightforward way. He and Manly opened the campaign at Wentworth on June 29 and continued it actively until just before the election.

A considerable number of Whig papers declined to support Manly because of his opposition to free suffrage, some of them going so far as to raise Reid's name as their candidate. The tide was so clearly and so strongly setting in favor of the amendment that Manly, seeing that his continued opposition would certainly defeat him, wavered. Canvassing the West he practically yielded the point and attempted to restore the failing fortunes of his party by bringing forward as a necessary accompaniment of free suffrage the change of the basis of representation from federal to free white. This was exceedingly popular with the western Whigs, but in the East it produced a storm. It also aroused the fears of the strong pro-slavery advocates who saw, or pretended to see, in it a great menace to the South. They declared that the passage



of such an amendment by a Southern State would not only encourage the anti-slavery forces but would actually seal the doom of the South. Reid on the stump made it clear that the two propositions had no connection.

Every possible charge was brought against Reid, most of them false and known to be so. An amusing incident was the attempt of Manly who was a staunch Episcopalian, to arouse the hostility of the Baptists against Reid, who was himself a devoted Baptist, because in the legislature he had voted against the State's making a loan to Wake Forest College. Manly also accused him repeatedly of having voted for the Wilmot Proviso although Reid was not a member of Congress when it was brought up. When forced to the wall he would answer that Reid had voted for the Oregon Bill which was the same thing, and at the next opportunity he would make his original statement. This was also a favorite ground of attack by the *Register*.

The presence and activity of two Wesleyan Methodist abolitionist ministers in Guilford County during the campaign aroused the anger of the pro-slavery element, and the failure of the grand jury of Guilford to find a true bill against them served to increase the feeling.

Manly never had a chance during the whole campaign and the election was only a confirmation of the expectation of every one. Reid's majority in a vote of 88,019 was 3,345. In the legislature the Democrats had a majority of four in the Senate and ten in the House of Commons. In state affairs the day of the Whig party was done. How gracefully the result was received by an element in the party, by no means small, can be seen from the following editorial of the *Register*. It serves also to explain in part why the party had fallen upon evil days:

There can be but little, or no doubt, therefore, that David S. Reid is elected governor of North Carolina. How does that sound to Whig ears—to the ears of those Whigs who have fixed upon our good old State for the first time since the amendment of the Constitution, the burning re-



proach of having a locofoco Governor, and the indelible disgrace of having chosen such a Chief Executive officer.

Some Whig papers, notably the *Greensboro Patriot*, however, were more generous, as well as more sensible, and showed a better feeling.

The legislature organized by the election of Weldon N. Edwards as speaker of the Senate over Andrew Joyner and James C. Dobbin as speaker of the House over Kenneth Rayner. An unusual thing about the membership was the presence of seven ex-congressmen, R. M. Saunders, Kenneth Rayner, William H. Washington, William B. Shepard, W. N. Edwards, Green W. Caldwell, and J. C. Dobbin. The Democrats were determined to have a party organization of both houses and so followed the example set by the Whigs in 1846 and gave their opponents only a doorkeeper. When the election of state officers came they were more liberal and re-elected Mr. Hill secretary of state. But C. L. Hinton was replaced as treasurer by D. W. Courts, and W. F. Collins as comptroller by W. J. Clarke. The desire of many Democrats for a districting of the State for members of Congress was not gratified since the party leaders deemed it unwise, in view of the important matters before the legislature, such as the free suffrage amendment, for which Whig votes were necessary to stir up any more party feeling than was necessary. In addition, a new apportionment was almost due under the census of 1850, and they thought it best to wait.

The legislature spent a large part of its time in discussing the slavery question, and mingled with this came inevitably renewed discussion of secession. Evidence of the new feeling present in the State was the appointment of a new joint committee on federal relations.

Early in the session, William B. Shepard introduced a series of resolutions in which after declaring the Constitution of the United States a compromise of conflicting interests and that whenever its provisions were so perverted or enlarged as to cause it to fail to secure its objects to even the weakest member, it ceased to be the Constitution to become

the creature of a dominant majority, alien in interest to the oppressed, there occurred the following statement:

Resolved, That although we love the Union of the States and view its destruction as a great calamity, we nevertheless regard the right to secede from it as a right of self-defense and protection, which the people of North Carolina have never surrendered, and never can surrender with due regard to their own safety and welfare, and that whenever a majority of the people of North Carolina shall solemnly resolve that they cannot safely remain in the Union, it is not only their right, but it is their duty to secede, and to punish such of her citizens as refuse submission to her will as rebels and traitors.

Resolved, That whilst we claim the right of secession as a right reserved to the people, and not surrendered by the Constitution, we believe it to be an extreme remedy, and one which should not be resorted to unless all means to preserve the Union and to protect the property and insure the welfare of the people, have manifestly failed.

Resolved, That the fugitive slave bill lately passed by Congress is in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution, and that its repeal or any alteration tending to impede an owner of a slave from retaking his property, will be regarded as undoubted and sufficient evidence that a majority of Congress was unrestrained by the express provisions of the Constitution, and that the time has arrived when it becomes the duty of the people of North Carolina to decide whether they will submit to an unlimited Government, or will resist its encroachments boldly and effectually.

They further declared that it was the duty of the United States to protect property in slaves and denied its right to prevent slavery in the territories, and declaring that the admission of California was an injustice to the South, they invited the other slave States to make common cause with North Carolina in demanding adequate protection. These were debated with great heat for a large part of the session and called forth a number of very able speeches, the two most notable being those of Shepard himself in the Senate and Dobbin in the House. Of the two the former's was the

most logical and the latter's was the most eloquent. "He took the ground boldly that the States are sovereign; that they have a right to judge of infractions of the Constitution, and of the mode and measure of redress—in a word that a State in the last resort has a right to secede from the Union and take care of her own interest and honor." He declared the right of secession not a "constitutional" right, but a "reserved" one, but one that never ought to be exercised except in the last resort. "Much should be borne for the sake of the Union, for the day of its dissolution will be the darkest day for human liberty the world has ever seen." The resolutions were finally defeated in the Senate by a vote of 31 to 16, 14 Democrats and two Whigs voting for and 10 Democrats and 21 Whigs against them. In the House the same resolutions were discussed in the committee of the whole but never came to a vote.

Governor Manly's message was a long and able document. It contained an earnest plea for the Union and a long and elaborate discussion of the question of constitutional amendment which showed plainly that the Governor was still opposed to change.

Both houses passed strong anti-protective tariff resolutions by large majorities, Whigs joining with Democrats in the condemnation of what they rightly termed sectional legislation.

Another proposition exciting considerable attention was one to repeal the charter of the North Carolina Railroad. This was debated for some time and then postponed indefinitely by a vote of 80 to 36.

Naturally the greatest interest of the members was in the question of amendment. The committee rejected popular election of judges and several other amendments, including one to forbid appropriations by the legislature for internal improvements unless they were approved by the people, but reported favorably one for free suffrage. The popular election of judges came up again before the houses but was rejected by both.



The resolution for free suffrage passed the House by a vote of 75 to 36 and when it reached the Senate was rejected, the required majority failing, three-fifths being required for the first legislature and two-thirds for the second. The Whigs in the main were opposed and the *Register* exultantly proclaimed after its failure: "Free suffrage lies among the slain." Most of the party, being politic and knowing the sentiment of the mass of the people, were not so open in their rejoicing. Another bill at once passed the House, 89 to 24, and this probably had some effect for the Senate reconsidered and passed the original 33 to 17. Throughout the debates the Whigs sought in every way to obscure the issue and finally centered their opposition on the method and advocated a free and open convention elected on the same basis as the House of Commons. A bill to take the sense of the opinion on this proposition, introduced by a Democrat, passed the House 67 to 40 and was defeated in the Senate. This greatly alarmed the eastern Whigs who feared an attempt to adopt the white basis of representation. After the adjournment of the legislature, thirty-six Whig members joined in an address to the people on the subject of constitutional reform, urging a convention as the proper method. This thus committed a part of the party to opposition to the pending amendment, and made the convention an issue for the next campaign.

In spite of the time consumed by the discussions referred to, the session was not unproductive. One hundred and ninety-two public laws and twenty-nine public resolutions were passed besides a mass of private legislation. Among the more important laws were those creating a geological and agricultural survey, chartering many railroads, turn-pikes, and navigation companies, and laying off the counties of Jackson, Madison and Yadkin.

The following resolution which was adopted by large majority is interesting for the light it throws upon the temper of the members:



Whereas a message has recently been transmitted to the Senate by his Excellency David S. Reid, inclosing "resolutions for the promotion of peace" forwarded by the Governor of Vermont, as having passed the Legislature of that State; and whereas the Legislature of the said State has recently passed an act for the nullification of an act of Congress, passed at its last session, on which the peace and harmony of this Union mainly depend; Therefore,

Be it resolved, That the Governor of this State be requested to send back to the Governor of Vermont the aforesaid "resolutions for the promotion of peace" with the declaration that North Carolina knows too well what is due to herself to receive from a sister State resolutions of that character, when the State so adopting and transmitting them, has been the first in the Confederacy to assume to herself the right of violating the Constitution of the United States, and bringing into jeopardy the peace and safety of the Union.

The congressional campaign of 1851 in most of the States was largely devoted to the discussion of the Compromise of 1850. In North Carolina this was the case in several of the districts, but in three the question of secession was made the issue by the Whig candidates, two of whom were successful. Mangum, Shepperd, Deberry, Outlaw, and Caldwell signed the pledge to support no man for office who did not favor the compromise. By this time the Democrats had grudgingly accepted it so there could not be much of an issue made of it.

In the first district Clingman ran as a Southern Rights Whig and defeated Burgess S. Gaither who accused Clingman of secession tendencies and spent much of his time denouncing South Carolina for its attitude and declaring that if elected he would vote for the use of force to check secession there. In the second, J. P. Caldwell was elected without opposition. In the third, secession was the subject of the whole campaign. Green W. Caldwell was nominated by the Democrats and Alfred Dockery opposed him, breathing fire and brimstone against South Carolina, and was triumphantly

elected. James T. Morehead was elected without opposition in the fourth. A. W. Venable was elected in the fifth over Calvin Graves who was supported by the Whigs as a "Union" Democrat. J. R. J. Daniel was chosen in the sixth over Henry W. Miller. W. S. Ashe had no opposition in the seventh. Edward Stanly made secession the issue in the eighth and defeated Thomas Ruffin of Wayne. In the ninth David Outlaw was re-elected, defeating W. F. Martin, a Democrat. The Northern papers followed the campaigns of Gaither, Dockery, and Stanly with much interest, particularly that of Stanly, whose election was hailed in the North as a great Union victory. When Congress met he received twenty-one votes for speaker, all from the North, except that cast by Dockery, and most of them from New England. They were of course due to his widely heralded opposition to slavery and secession.

Such campaigns were naturally not unnoticed in the State. The Whig press made every Democratic candidate a disunionist in addition to being a demagogue. The Democratic press saw in every Whig candidate a submissionist who cared nothing for the interest or honor of his State and secession. The *Register* and *Fayetteville Observer* more than ever were slanderous in their comment. The Whig papers carefully avoided being forced to give their real opinions as to secession as a principle, but no such caution animated the Democratic papers, particularly the *Standard* which was the chief defender of the right of secession, though it did not advocate invoking it now. Its belief is best expressed in the following contemporary editorial:

We have heard the idea recently expressed that a State has no right to secede from the Union—that there is no help from oppression except by revolution; in other words, that the States are the creatures and dependents of the Federal Government and, of course, subject to its physical coercion. Such an assumption, we humbly submit, is unsupported by any testimony derived from the Constitution itself or any

single circumstance attending its foundation or adoption. It is, moreover, at war with all regular ideas of free republican Government and the undoubted independence of the States, as that independence has been displayed in their separate organizations since 1787. We hold that as no State could originally have been forced into the Union, none can be forced in or rather prevented from going out.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1852

The campaign of 1852 loomed large in advance to both parties. The Democrats ardently desired to hold their advantage and to prove to the Whigs and to themselves that it was not merely accidental and temporary; the Whigs with equal longing hoped to regain their lost position and prestige, to have again in possession the government of the State for which they had come to feel that they had a title in fee simple, and the snatching away of which by the Democrats they had not ceased to regard not only as high handed presumption, but actual robbery without shadow of legality. Then, too, the next legislature was a particularly important one, since upon it would fall the responsibility of redistricting the State for the two houses for the next twenty years, and for Congress for the next decade. A United States senator was to be elected to succeed Mangum, and the free suffrage amendment was to be passed on for final submission to the people. Naturally both sides were determined to use all their energy and thought to win.

The Whig convention met late in April and its character was not such as to raise the hopes of the party, since but few of the well known leaders of the party were present and since there was a marked lack of the unity and confidence characteristic of the victorious past. John Winslow was temporary chairman and F. B. Satterthwaite was president. Thirty-eight counties were represented. Speeches were made by Dr. F. J. Hill, H. W. Miller, H. K. Nash, Joseph Banks, R. E. Troy, R. I. Wynne, J. G. McDugald, and John Winslow. A. H. Sheppard, F. J. Hill, H. K. Nash, and H. W. Miller were elected delegates to the national convention. The platform endorsed Fillmore and Graham for the nominations, but declared willingness to support any nominee who favored complete acceptance and support of the compromise. It opposed intervention, condemned the legislation of Congress



in regard to public lands, and declared the purpose of the party to resist all efforts to alienate the sections and thus weaken the Union. On constitutional reform the party still "straddled," declaring that if constitutional changes were to be made that they favored an open convention, chosen on the basis of the Commons, if the people wanted it. This was merely an attempt to stave off free suffrage, or equal suffrage, as it was now generally called, without taking an open and definite stand against it. They were well aware that there was small likelihood of a convention's being called in North Carolina, and it was one of the last things that the party as a whole desired, but the very hopelessness of securing one, made the demand an eminently safe one and the very best block to the passage of the suffrage amendment, and at the same time they could boast of a democratic spirit in making the demand.

There had been comparatively little discussion of a candidate for governor, and there was really a wide division of opinion as to the sort of candidate that should be chosen. The *Greensboro Patriot* had demanded that the convention should take a definite stand on the suffrage question and that it should nominate a man of decided and well-known views on the question. On the other hand, the *Register* said the convention should select the party candidate without reference to his views on state reform or state questions generally. It was fairly safe to predict that the latter view would prevail. Shortly before the convention Alfred Dockery made a public announcement that he could not accept the nomination if it should be offered to him. It was clear, really, by this time, that John Kerr would be the choice of the convention. He was well known in the party, had a considerable reputation as a stump speaker, and was well thought of by the group of Raleigh leaders, the "Raleigh Clique," which controlled the party. He was nominated unanimously. Kerr was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in 1811, and was educated in Virginia. He studied law under Judge Pearson and settled in Caswell County where he had many relatives and

where he developed quite an extensive practice. He was also a farmer. Up to this time he had never held any elective office. He was a stormy and fiery debater of good though not unusual ability.

The Democratic convention met on May 13. John S. Eaton was temporary chairman and Duncan K. McRae president. Forty-two counties were represented, the largest number any Democratic convention had thus far had. There was much enthusiasm and decided unity. Speeches were made by R. P. Dick, R. M. Saunders, Abram Rencher, and J. C. Dobbin. Reid was unanimously renominated, no other name having been mentioned. He appeared and addressed the convention, thereby exciting the ire of the Whigs who, forgetting that Morehead, Graham, and Manly had done the same thing, insisted that it was improper conduct on the part of the governor.

The platform declared for a strict construction of the Constitution of the United States, for the independent treasury, for a tariff for revenue only, for economy in the federal administration, and asserted devotion to the Union and desire for its preservation by a strict and faithful observance of the Constitution and impartial justice to all its parts. It affirmed willingness to abide by the Compromise and insisted upon the Fugitive Slave Law, refusing support to any man who was not pledged to it. It renewed the party opposition to distribution which was again being much discussed in North Carolina by the Whigs as well as by a number of Democrats. Robert Strange was declared the choice of the party for Vice President. Reid's administration was heartily endorsed and devotion to the cause of free suffrage was affirmed, strong opposition being declared at the same time to a change to the white basis for representation. J. C. Dobbin, R. M. Saunders, W. N. Edwards, and G. W. Caldwell were chosen as delegates to the national convention.

Interest in the State in national politics was exceedingly keen. The Democrats were fairly well united on James Buchanan, but the Whigs were divided, or at least the leaders

were. Whig sentiment was overwhelmingly favorable to Fillmore, and the *Register* had raised his name with that of Graham early in the fall of 1851. But Badger was thought to be for Scott—though this was a mistake—and Mangum and Stanly were openly so, both on the ground of availability. Even the *Register*, seeing the trend of sentiment, began in March to hint that Scott would not be unacceptable. Mangum was chairman of the Whig caucus in Washington which was broken up by division because it declined to pledge party support to the full terms of the Compromise. Clingman and Outlaw were among the seceders and signed the address drawn up by those who left. Morehead, Dockery and Stanly stayed in the caucus in the hope of a compromise which they declared absolutely necessary. Scott's silence on the Fugitive Slave Law hurt him in the State, as did the suspicion, loudly voiced by the Democrats that he was Seward's candidate. And so many of the Whigs grew very bitter towards Mangum because of his identification with Scott's candidacy. This feeling was so strong that Mangum refused to take the nomination for Vice President which was offered him after Scott was chosen. The North Carolina delegation in the national convention voted for Fillmore until the end. On the twelfth ballot the clerk by mistake announced that the vote of North Carolina was cast for Scott. A stampede was about to begin when he corrected the error, but this was not enough for the North Carolina delegates and their chairman at once arose and said in a loud voice, "North Carolina casts ten votes for Fillmore and none for Scott." Crittenden and Dawson in addition to Mangum declined the nomination for Vice President and William A. Graham received it almost unanimously.

When the Democratic convention met in Baltimore, R. M. Saunders was temporary chairman. Dobbin, the chairman of the delegation, took a very prominent part on the floor. The delegation voted for sixteen ballots for Buchanan solidly. On the seventeenth Douglas got one vote from North Carolina which had increased to four by the thirty-



fourth. From the thirty-fifth to the forty-eighth they voted solidly for William L. Marcy of New York. When on the forty-ninth ballot North Carolina was called, Dobbin rose and said:

Mr. President, pardon me for obtruding one word before North Carolina casts her vote. We come to pander to no factious artifices here—to enlist under no man's banner at the hazard of principles—to embark in no crusade to prostrate any aspirant for the sake of sectional or personal triumph. We come to select one in the array of noble spirits in our ranks to be our great leader and champion in the glorious struggle for the great principles of democracy. Again and again have we tendered the banner to the North. Save our happy Union, guard well the rights of the States, say we, and you can have the honor of the standard-bearer. Zealously and sincerely have we presented the name of Buchanan, that noble son of the Old Keystone, around whom the warmest affections of our hearts have long clustered. We have turned to New York and sought to honor one of her distinguished sons, whose splendid administrative powers have just been so faithfully eulogized by my friend from Mississippi. We now feel that in the midst of discord and distraction, the olive branch, if tendered once more, cannot be neglected. We feel that the hour now has come when the spirit of strife must be banished, and leave to reign in her place the milder and gentler and holier spirit of a liberal patriotism. Come, Mr. President, let us to the altar and make our sacrifices for our country. We now propose with other friends the name of one who was in the field just long enough to prove himself a gallant soldier; who was in the councils just long enough to demonstrate that he is the statesman of the strong mind and honest heart; who has exhibited to his countrymen, in his career of legislation, that he knew the rights of the South as well as the North, the East and the West; whose sterling principles of democracy are strong, solid, and enduring like the granite hills of his own New Hampshire home—Gen. Franklin Pierce. Come, Mr. President, let us strike now—now—for harmony and conciliation, and save our principles and our country.



A scene of wild excitement followed, the convention was stampeded and Pierce was nominated on that ballot, although his highest vote before that ballot had been twenty-nine, and he had lost votes since that time.

The state campaign began as soon as Kerr was nominated for he was on the stump before the Democratic convention met. As soon as Reid was nominated he went out also and the first joint debate occurred at Raleigh in June. Kerr devoted nearly all his time to the discussion of national affairs and when he finally turned his attention to the real issue he said that if the people wanted it he was in favor of calling a convention, but that he was unalterably opposed to the legislative method of amendment. He never would openly and directly oppose free suffrage, but he always insisted that the constitution, as it was, was "the most perfect constitutional instrument ever devised by the wit of man." The *Register* in an analysis of Kerr's practical views stated that he thought free suffrage in itself harmless, but feared it because it would open the way for "tinkering" with the sacred instrument, but really he was entirely opposed to any change, being as the *Register's* article indicated entirely reactionary. His arguments against constitutional change if read aloud to-day might be taken for an echo of the campaign of 1914, so perfectly does it match those employed then and for the same purpose. Kerr was not alone in his opposition. It was more clearly apparent in this campaign than ever that the Whig leaders were entirely opposed to reform and that any apparent leaning towards it was merely for popular favor. The rank and file were divided, the West genuine in its demand for an open convention to make a number of needed reforms, and the East, fearing the possible change to the white basis, being frantically opposed to a convention and, rather less so, to free suffrage.

The campaign was very heated and charges and counter charges rang from the stump and filled the columns of the press. The Whig press as usual was vehemently abusive, and, as usual, the *Register* took the lead in this sort of thing.

Every Democrat candidate was a demagogue in its phraseology and some epithet such as "dirty" was apt to precede the title. It attacked Reid bitterly, always calling him "Holden's tool," "Holden's Man Friday," or the "prince of demagogues," and it denied to him honesty, ability, or decency. There were at this time twenty Whig and eleven Democratic newspapers in the State, but the odds were somewhat lessened by the fact that several of the former refused to support Kerr because of his attitude towards suffrage reform and a number more declined to support Scott, some being for Webster and some for Fillmore. The Whigs were much alarmed by this defection, and Graham wrote the *Wilmington Commercial*, which was associating his name with that of Webster, asking that his name should be withdrawn. There was also a considerable defection among prominent Whigs, notable among whom were Clingman, who came out in a long public letter in advocacy of Pierce's election, and Rayner, who refused to take any part in the campaign because of his opposition to Scott.

The campaign was largely conducted on the free suffrage and convention issues. Kerr, in his effort to please both East and West, became involved in contradictions which hurt him in both sections. Reid, having a single position to support, was more fortunately placed.

The result was never in doubt. Reid was elected by a majority of 5,564 in a vote of 91,570, a gain of over two thousand over 1850. The legislative elections caused surprise and bitterness, however, to the Democrats. They held the Senate by the narrow majority of six, and the Whigs captured the House and had a majority of two on joint ballot, with the possibility of electing the Senator if the party vote was united, but with small hope of carrying the amendment or of redistricting the State to suit themselves.

The presidential campaign lagged after the state election, for the people lost interest. Graham's name gave the Whig ticket strength in the State that was sufficient to save it. By a strange co-incidence William R. King, the Democratic can-

didate for Vice President was also a native North Carolinian and a former student of the University.

Scott and Graham received a popular majority of 1,697 in a total vote of 64,933. The total vote was more than 26,000 short of that in the state election, and the majority was smaller by more than 6,000 votes than Taylor's in 1848. As in state affairs, so in national, the day of the Whig party in North Carolina had really reached its end. It was to continue to exist, an opposition, minority party, a shadow of its former self and steadily losing strength, based more, indeed on opposition to the Democratic party than on definite political principles of its own, yet furnishing sufficient opposition to keep the latter's organization at a high point of efficiency without ever really threatening its control of the State.

Governor Reid was compelled to call the legislature into extra session in October to enact a new electoral law under the apportionment of 1850 which gave North Carolina only eight members of Congress and hence only ten electoral votes. W. N. Edwards was elected speaker of the Senate over Andrew Joyner, the perennial candidate of the Whigs, and Dobbin was defeated by John Baxter in the House.

Governor Reid in his special message suggested that the regular session should be abandoned, and this was done, the legislature not adjourning when the particular purpose of the session was accomplished. In his regular message he urged the ratification of the amendment, arguing against a convention and a change in the basis of representation. His message also contained an endorsement of public education and internal improvements and urged reform of the taxation system.

The portion of his message relating to free suffrage was referred to a select committee which reported adversely to the Governor's recommendation. A minority report endorsed the governor's view and urged action. The amendment passed the House by the requisite two-thirds' majority, but on November 31 it was defeated in the Senate, thirty-one



to sixteen. Reconsideration was immediately decided upon and, on December 3, it failed again by a vote of thirty-three to fifteen, Speaker Edwards not voting. His vote would have carried it and his action, as might be imagined, greatly angered the Democrats, although he was known to oppose the amendment and had opposed it before his election. No attempt was made to pass a new bill, but a bill to submit to the people the question of a convention failed in the House.

The Democrats were deeply distressed at the failure of the amendment but were not disheartened, for they knew that a large majority of the people wanted it. The opposition Whigs were jubilant, the *Register* saying, "We are unwilling to believe that there is a husting in the State from which any one who begins to croak about free suffrage will not be driven with hisses and scorn."

The attempt to elect a senator caused a long drawn out contest. Dobbin was the nominee of the Democratic caucus, but Saunders still had his eye on the place and refused to vote for him until it was too late and several other Democrats followed his example. Some of these voted for James B. Shepard. The Whigs nominated Rayner but never voted for him with any regularity and they later supported N. W. Woodfin. Throughout they cast votes for Saunders, who always made a bid for Whig support, or any other Democrat they thought they might encourage to stay in the fight and whose candidacy might embarrass the organization and prevent the election of Dobbin. Dobbin's conduct in the matter, like most things in his career, was very fine. Wheeler says of him, "All of us who were members of the legislature can remember the intense excitement of the time. The opposition was able, active, and not over-scrupulous. They could not elect; but by aid of one or two marplots of the other side could prevent the election of the Democratic candidate. Amid all of this excitement Mr. Dobbin appeared the only calm and considerate person among us. After some forty ballotings he requested that a caucus be called, and with unaffected sincerity and glowing eloquence he requested his



name to be withdrawn and some other person voted for. He saw with sorrow the party distracted by jealousies, and a fearful chasm of disorder had been opened, engulfing its unity, if not its very existence. He withdrew his name; but it was in vain. If he could not be elected no other person should be, and the State had only one senator for a long time." Towards the end of the session a number of the Democrats voted for Clingman but without result.

Chief Justice Ruffin resigned during the session and Judge Battle was elected to succeed him on the bench, Judge Nash becoming chief justice. Saunders, to the disgust of the Democrats, who not unnaturally blamed him for a large part of their woes, was elected to the Superior bench to succeed Battle.

One notable accomplishment of the session was the establishment of the office of superintendent of common schools and the election of Calvin H. Wiley to fill it. He was a Whig member from Guilford who had proposed the creation of the office two years before, but failing, had come back and was now successful. His work in the position needs no description here.

The session was also notable for the incorporation of a large number of railroads, turnpikes, and plank roads. No less than forty-one of the latter were chartered. The two most important railroads were the Atlantic and North Carolina from Beaufort to Goldsboro, and the North Carolina and Western, later the Western North Carolina, from Salisbury to the Tennessee line.

The laying off of the congressional districts and the apportionment of the House of Commons was accomplished without much difficulty, but the laying off of the senatorial districts was accompanied by an attempt on the part of the Whigs in the House, who had failed to carry their point, as indeed had the Democrats, to let the legislature adjourn *sine die* under a joint resolution adopted some time previously, without passing the bill. Their idea, apparently, was that the resulting situation would force the call of a

convention. Their plan, if they had any, was twice defeated by Speaker Baxter, a Whig himself, who, to prevent such action, twice violated the rules of the House by peremptorily cutting off debate and forcing a vote on the Senate's resolution to receive the adjournment resolution. He then resigned and was immediately re-elected.

The early months of 1853 saw Badger nominated by President Fillmore to be associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. This was done after an understanding had been reached that the Senate would confirm the nomination which however, it failed to do. Another national honor paid a North Carolinian was the appointment of Dobbin to be secretary of the navy in President Pierce's cabinet. His distinguished services in this capacity are known to-day to only too few North Carolinians. Among the things he accomplished were the establishment of the apprentice system, the system of promotion for merit, the system of a retired list on pay, and the construction of six first-class steam frigates, the first in the service. In his last report was the following which is of particular interest today:

I deem it my duty candidly to express my opinion that our Navy is not only too diminutive to be expected to contend fairly with that of other respectable Nations, is insufficient to give protection to our commerce, but is unquestionably too feeble to command the waters of our own coast. . . . I could not if I would disguise the truth that even a respectable Navy must necessarily involve large expenditures. But it is equally true that without naval strength a six months' war with any Nation with a powerful marine would in the seizure of rich and valuable cargoes, in the destruction of fleets of merchantmen, and in plundering defenseless points along the coast, cost us more, than a squadron of invincible men-of-war. . . . I regard the steady increase of naval strength not as a war, but as a peace measure—a measure of defense involving grave questions of commercial security and National independence. Negotiations and diplomacy will be exhausted before war is made upon a Nation of brave men, powerful and ready for the conflict. . .

There is much in the proud consciousness of National strength that stimulates trade, emboldens enterprise, and nerves the arm of commerce. And while I by no means suggest the policy or the necessity of so large a naval force as many powerful Nations foster, yet it is desirable and attainable, too, that the American citizen, whether in the opulent emporiums along the coast or in the rural retreats of the interior, or borne in his adventurous spirit to traffic in the thronged ports of the strong or the insecure ports of the barbarous and weak, should gather confidence and courage and energy from the reflection that he belongs to a Government recognized by all as able to avenge his wrongs and vindicate his rights.

The congressional campaign of 1853 had little in it worthy of particular note, save the revival of the distribution issue. The districts were much changed by the new law and their numbers have no reference to those of the former districts. In the first H. M. Shaw, a Democrat, defeated David Outlaw. Thomas Ruffin of Wayne, was opposed unsuccessfully by W. C. Loftin, an independent Democrat. In the third, Duncan K. McRae was a candidate, but, being appointed consul to Paris, withdrew, leaving W. S. Ashe and W. F. Leak, the latter running as an advocate of distribution, to fight it out. Ashe was elected. In the fourth, which seemed safely Democratic, there was much opposition to Venable, the sitting member, because he had voted for the Bennett land distribution bill and because he was opposed to the acquisition of Cuba. A. M. Lewis, who was another Democratic candidate, proposed a convention to settle their respective claims, but Venable, hoping for Whig support, refused and both stayed in the race. The Whigs then brought out Sion H. Rogers who made distribution the issue with Lewis and was elected. In the fifth Morehead declined to run again and John Kerr was successful, the Democrats making no nomination but voting generally for Abraham Rencher. J. P. Caldwell had been much opposed to Scott the year before, so the Whigs dropped him and brought out R. C. Puryear who defeated George D. Boyd, the regular Democratic

candidate. Burton Craige and James W. Osborne faced each other in the seventh and conducted the most spirited campaign of all the candidates, in which Craige, in spite of the inclination for South Carolina political ideas with which the Whigs charged him, was successful. Burgess S. Gaither again opposed Clingman in the mountain district and with the same result, Clingman, who was now, to all intents and purposes, a Democrat, but with much Whig strength, defeating him with ease. In spite of the new apportionment having been made partly by Whigs, the Democrats had won five of the districts.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1854

North Carolina Whigs in the autumn of 1853 began to gird up their loins for the contest of the coming year. The leaders had not yet discovered that the sceptre had departed from Israel and were unable to believe that Democratic victory in 1850 and 1852 was due to anything else but accident, plus David S. Reid. With Reid's approaching ineligibility they were confident of being able again to regain their lost ground. The leaders were not at all in close touch, however, with the people and had no conception of the changes being wrought in the very fibre of popular sentiment in the State. Their aristocratic tendencies in politics were more clearly recognized, too, by the people. The *Wilmington Journal* in the spring of 1854 gave the following analysis of the Whig attitude which, while it may have been exaggerated, was nevertheless fundamentally true:

The Whigs appear to think this world of ours composed of two very different and distinct classes—themselves and their candidates who, dwelling in the odor of "Respectability" are above and beyond criticism, and must be handled with silk gloves properly scented—and the mere rabble, the "Locofocos," comprising a majority of the voters of North Carolina who are utterly unworthy of respectable treatment.

The aspect of national affairs also immeasurably helped the Democratic party. Hope as the South might that the compromise of 1850 would be a finality, there was small reason at that or any other time to believe that such would be the case and as a matter of fact few really believed it, for the slavery question was patently one that from its nature could not yet be closed. The menace of the situation from the Southern standpoint was the attitude of the Northern Whigs. Consequently these things, with the firm hold that the old leaders of the party had upon its machinery, were leading to a steady and growing exodus of Whigs to the Dem-

ocracy. These were of two classes. The more numerous was probably that composed of those who were uneasy as to Southern interests and who were fearful of the tendencies of the Northern Whigs, believing that their hostility to slavery was a menace not only to any real unity in the party but to the South as a whole. Many of these were young men who were inclined to be particularly extreme in their advocacy of the Southern position, but older leaders such as Clingman were also to be found. The second class was composed almost entirely of young men who wanted to get into the more open atmosphere of the Democratic party and to enjoy its greater opportunities for political advancement. It is scarcely necessary to add that this class was also profoundly affected by the free suffrage issue.

On December 3, 1853, the Whig convention issued the call for the state convention to meet February 21, 1854, and immediately Whig meetings were held throughout the State, marked by increased enthusiasm and confidence. The Democratic committee did not meet until January 25, and the date selected for their convention was April 19.

In the meantime momentous action was being taken in Congress. In January, Stephen A. Douglas introduced the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which, in spite of the fact that a deliberately and grossly distorted view of his action has since led to general misunderstanding of his purposes, was nevertheless a veritable Pandora's box of national ills. By it the Missouri Compromise was definitely repealed and the principles of popular or "squatter" sovereignty were substituted to determine the question of slavery in the territories. The bill was pending for more than four months and during that time was the subject of much discussion in North Carolina.

Practically all the Democrats hailed the bill joyfully as a settlement of the slavery question. Douglas became more popular than ever in the State and the Democrats asked the Whigs if they could now justify the epithets such as "dirty little demagogue" which they had so freely applied to him

in the past. The latter were at first disposed to opposition for purely party reasons, but it was faint-hearted opposition. The following comment of the *Register*, soon after the introduction of the bill is highly significant:

We confess that we doubt the utility of disturbing the Missouri Compromise, which was acquiesced in by the South as the condition of the admission of Missouri as a slave State—though we hardly know what modification our views may undergo. The North may say that by attempting to repeal the solemn slavery restriction clause, the South has violated a solemn compact, and it will be difficult to refute the charge.

But the growing sectional feeling evoked in defense of slavery was very strong and that combined with Badger's hearty endorsement and support of the bill determined the Whig attitude. In the House Puryear and Rogers voted against it, but the rest of the delegation voted for it and John Kerr made an elaborate speech in advocacy of it which with Badger's speeches won enthusiastic commendation from the Democrats. The Whig convention in February endorsed the principle of non-intervention by Congress in respect to slavery in the territories but went no further. The rank and file of the party, however, soon accepted the bill as entirely as the Democrats and its passage was hailed by all without distinction of party as a great Southern triumph.

In neither party was there at the beginning of the pre-convention movement any outstanding candidate. George Davis, James W. Osborne, Edwin G. Reade, D. M. Barringer, Alfred Dockery, David Outlaw and Joseph B. Cherry were all mentioned as Whig possibilities. In the Democratic party there was at first even wider variation, John W. Ellis, Asa Biggs, William H. Thomas, Abraham Rencher, George Bower, Thomas Bragg, Cadwallader Jones, Columbus Mills, and W. W. Avery all being discussed. The West was loudly claiming the candidate, with Ellis, Mills, or Avery as favorites, but Ellis and Avery at once declined to be considered and Mills had no chance whatever.

In the fall of 1853 Holden and Daniel W. Courts, the state treasurer, gave much time to a consideration of the question of a candidate. They finally settled upon Thomas Bragg and when he attended the winter term of the Supreme Court, Holden had a conference with him at the Yarbrough House at which Bragg consented to be the party candidate if there was no serious opposition to him in the party. Holden then called the Wake County Democrats to a meeting and resolutions were passed endorsing Bragg. Other counties rapidly followed suit and it was generally understood before the convention met that he would be selected.

The Whig convention organized with Joseph B. Cherry as temporary chairman and chose Richard S. Donnell president. The renewed activity and confidence of the leaders was seen in the presence of 185 delegates from 41 counties. The platform was very short. It expressed the devotion of the party to the Constitution and the Union and avowed a determination to resist all attempts to alienate one section from another. Once more it demanded the distribution of the proceeds from the public lands. Its expression concerning slavery in the territories has already been noted. As a matter of course it condemned the Pierce administration. On the free suffrage question it had the following to say: "Resolved, That we are of opinion that the people of North Carolina desire a change in the Constitution of the State, and that this can be most wisely and safely done by a convention of delegates, elected by the people; therefore, we recommend to the Legislature to call such a convention, and, in submitting the election of delegates to the people, so to provide, as to preserve the present basis of representation in the Legislature."

The platform closed with an endorsement of common schools and internal improvements. When the nomination of a candidates came, Alfred Dockery was unanimously chosen.

Alfred Dockery was born in Richmond County in 1797 within a mile of the place where he spent his life and where



he finally died. Deprived by poverty and by the necessity of assisting in the support of a large family of any opportunity of education, he, nevertheless, rose through industry, character, and native ability, not only to considerable wealth, but to high political position. His public life commenced in 1822 when he was a member of the House of Commons. He served as a delegate to the convention of 1835 and in 1836 was elected to the State Senate and was continuously a member until 1845 when he was elected to Congress over Jonathan Worth, the regular Whig candidate. He served only one term, but in 1851 was again a candidate and won, as will be remembered, on the issue of upholding the Union against secession. He was a plain man of hard sense, genuinely devoted to the State and its people, and an earnest advocate of public education and internal improvements. He was an effective campaigner and a strong man on the stump. An amusing instance of his methods has come to us from his campaign with Worth. The latter was a poor and comparatively unknown lawyer when he ran for Congress and on one occasion he unwisely attempted to win the sympathy of the crowd by calling attention to Dockery's wealth, particularly as evidenced by his fine brick residence. He had scarcely mentioned this when Dockery jumped to his feet and rushing to the front of the platform extended both arms and cried: "Yes, and it was these old yaller hands of mine that built all of it."

The Democratic convention indicated even more enthusiasm and confidence than the Whig meeting. Forty-nine counties were represented and the high-water mark to that time of 200 delegates was reached. Asa Biggs was temporary chairman and Abraham Rencher president. According to expectation Bragg was nominated unanimously. The platform declared for a rigid construction of the Constitution of the United States as a grant of limited powers. It endorsed as usual the independent treasury, condemned a national bank, favored a tariff for revenue, and opposed protection, endorsed the administrations of Pierce and Reid,

approved the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and opposed distribution. In three strong planks it discussed state questions, taking firm ground for free suffrage, internal improvements and common schools.

Thomas Bragg was a native of Warren County. His father, a carpenter and contractor, was a man of fine sense and a firm believer in education. There were four sons, all of whom were distinguished. John Bragg graduated from the University in 1824 and after five years' service in the North Carolina legislature removed to Alabama where he won reputation as an editor, lawyer, judge, and a member of Congress. He was later to be a member of the secession convention of Alabama. William Bragg was a captain in the Confederate service and was killed in battle. Braxton Bragg is too well known for any notice here. Thomas Bragg was the ablest of the four. He was born in 1810 and received his early education under Rev. George W. Freeman, who later became Bishop of Arkansas and Rev. James H. Otey, who became Bishop of Tennessee. Later Bragg was sent to Partridge's Academy at Middletown, Conn., where he remained three years. Studying law under Judge John Hall, he was admitted to the bar and began practice at Jackson, at once winning reputation in the profession. As a matter of fact he was easily the greatest lawyer who held the executive office in the period under discussion. He served as a member of the House of Commons in 1842 and was chairman of the judiciary committee, then the chief honor on the floor. His only other public service was as a presidential elector in 1844, 1848, and 1852, when he canvassed against William W. Cherry, Kenneth Rayner and D. A. Barnes in succession and proved himself in their class as a debater and campaigner.

The campaign began as soon as Dockery was nominated. Bragg met him in joint debate several times before his own nomination, not as an avowed candidate, but simply as a political opponent. The campaign continued until the election accompanied by the most complete and therefore the most

arduous canvass of the State up to that time. Dockery attempted to make internal improvements the chief issue because his own chief interest was there and because Bragg had never been strong in his support of them. The proposed Western Extension of the North Carolina Railroad was popular in the State and Bragg's failure to take a strong position in favor of it made the prospect for his election look dark when Holden warned him of the danger and Bragg at once gave his hearty endorsement to the proposed measure.

Having thus strengthened himself Bragg had the advantage as to the other issues of the campaign. The Whigs had been much divided on the question of free suffrage and the plank of their platform which was a compromise, did not even meet with individual Whig approval. The party leaders did not like free suffrage any better than they had done when it was first proposed. The *Register* during the campaign denied that the party had ever opposed it, but in addition to the absurdity of the claim, the party leaders and the Whig press, including the *Register*, still sneered at it as "Reid's hobby," "a demagogue's pet" and "Douglas' present." The mass of the people, however, irrespective of party, wanted the reform and the Democratic record on the question, in spite of Weldon N. Edwards' casting vote which had defeated it in 1852, was fairly clear.

The Whigs as usual claimed internal improvements and public education as their own. True as that had been in the past, it had now ceased to be so. Under Democratic rule both systems had been greatly extended, and to the Whig charge that continued Democratic control and conduct of state affairs would be ruinous, the Democrats were able to reply by pointing to the fact that the State was more prosperous than ever before and that North Carolina bonds were selling for the first time at a premium.

The election resulted in a majority for Bragg of 2,061 in a total vote of 95,349. Compared to the result of 1852 the Whigs had gained in every congressional district but the first and the seventh, their total gain being 3,505. The legis-



lative result, however, showed greater Democratic strength. In the Senate there was a clear Democratic majority of twelve, and in the House one of ten. Among the Whigs in the House were four so-called Southern Rights Whigs who usually acted with the Democrats so the strength of the latter was even greater than their majority.

The politics of this year indicated two things which might menace the continued triumph of the Democratic party. One was the resurgence of the question of distribution. Many Democrats were tempted by the possibility of so much money's coming to the State as a free gift and a Democratic newspaper was established in advocacy of the policy, but the time was not ripe and only one issue appeared. The other threat lay in the rise of the Know Nothing party and its extension South. The existence of the party was much discussed in the summer, and in the autumn a meeting of the new party was held secretly in Raleigh. The Democrats attacked it bitterly for its religious intolerance and declared it merely abolition in disguise. The *Register* and the members of the Whig party generally were inclined to take a much more charitable view of it and in fact were ready to join the new movement.

When the legislature met, Warren Winslow of Cumberland was chosen speaker of the Senate over Joseph B. Cherry of Bertie and S. P. Hill of Caswell, speaker of the House over J. S. Amis of Granville. Governor Reid in his message recommended the renewed passage of the free suffrage amendment and also urged the popular election of judges. Just as strongly he asked for a reform of the entire revenue system of the State. He devoted a considerable portion of the message to the questions of internal improvements and public education and closed with the suggestion that the threatening aspect of national affairs should be considered by the legislature.

The election of two United States senators made the session notable from the politicians' point of view. The Whigs had some hope that Badger's earnest support of the



Kansas-Nebraska bill might cause his re-election by the Democrats. The *Register* had gone so far as to say that this would probably fuse the two parties in the State and sever all connection with the Northern Whigs who were so detested by the Democrats and now, be it said, by many of the Whigs. But such action was not generally expected.

Dobbin signified to his friends before the legislature met his wish that his name should not be presented. The candidates were Biggs, Reid, Clingman, and Craige. The following was the caucus vote, forty-four being necessary to a choice:

	<i>First</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Fourth</i>
Biggs .....	42	50	—	—
Reid .....	35	36	37	46
Clingman .....	11	—	21	21
Craige .....	—	—	25	19
Thomas Ruffin ....	—	—	2	—
Totals.....	88	86	85	86

The Whigs supported Badger and D. M. Barringer.

Governor Reid's acceptance of the election created a vacancy in the gubernatorial office which under the constitution was filled by the speaker of the Senate. It was the view of the Democrats that the speaker not only became governor but continued to fill his legislative office as well. The Democratic leaders submitted the question to Judge Ruffin who declared it his opinion that Winslow must remain as speaker. The Whigs attacked this view and much time was consumed in argument on the question but numbers prevailed and for a month Warren Winslow was both governor and speaker of the Senate. At the expiration of that time Bragg was inaugurated. In his inaugural address he endorsed the proposed constitutional amendment, declared his intention of supporting the movement for internal improvements, and in his discussion of national affairs showed himself to be a potential secessionist.

In the election of state officers the Democrats followed

party lines very closely, electing only one Whig, that being William Hill, the secretary of state. After the filling of places the legislature had time to consider the important question of constitutional amendment. William A. Graham, who was a member of the Senate, introduced an amendment to the bill providing for the submission to the people of the question of an unlimited convention. The bill ignored the need of a two-thirds' vote of each house to call a convention and won the instant opposition of the Democrats on that score as well as on the merits of the question. It provoked a long discussion and was rejected as were various other amendments proposed by the Whigs. The original bill then passed by the following vote:

*For*—Senate: Democrats 30; Whigs 5. House: Democrats 64; Whigs 29.

*Against*—Senate: Democrats 3; Whigs 12. House: Democrats 0; Whigs 18.

A strong series of resolutions, introduced by Thomas Settle, endorsing the Kansas-Nebraska act was tabled. This was the only national question which came before the legislature and it was probably smothered to avoid the waste of time in discussion.

Important railroad legislation was enacted. Additional stock to the amount of one million dollars was taken in the North Carolina Railroad; the authorized stock of the Atlantic and North Carolina was increased with the provision that the State should still hold its two-thirds of the whole amount of the stock; the Western North Carolina Railroad was incorporated to run from Salisbury to some point on the French Broad beyond the Blue Ridge, the State agreeing to take as much as \$1,400,000 of the stock; the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford Railroad was incorporated to connect Wilmington and Charlotte, the State agreeing to take four hundred thousand dollars in stock and six hundred thousand dollars more when the road was extended to Rutherfordton.

Among the most important acts of the session was the

passage of a new and greatly improved revenue act which was expected to relieve the State of any uneasiness as to funds. It was a step to reform, but the tax question was one which remained unsettled.

The congressional campaign of 1855 was chiefly interesting for the prominence of the Know-Nothing question in the campaign. The American or Know-Nothing party, which had for its cardinal principles opposition to immigration and the participation of recent immigrants in politics and opposition to the Roman Catholic Church, was now spreading very rapidly in North Carolina, where there had never been any alien problem and where none was likely to arise and where there was only a handful of Roman Catholics and no Catholic problem, and by the summer the estimated membership was thirty-five thousand. Some Democrats joined the order, but, discovering shortly that in North Carolina at any rate it was nothing but the old Whig party in disguise, soon abandoned it. It was through the public withdrawal of such members that the State as a whole was first informed of its presence. James B. Shepard was the best known Democrat to join and he remained a member. Probably the leading member in the State was Kenneth Rayner who in 1855 secured the adoption by the national council of the third or "Union" degree, notable for its oath of allegiance to the Union, which he wrote. The Democrats viewed the order with horror for a double reason. They disliked its nature, being opposed to a secret political society, and they recognized its identification with the Whig party. Press and platform orator vied in denunciation of it and Judge Saunders at Buncombe Superior Court, when the grand jury asked for instructions upon the subject, charged that it was an illegal and hence indictable conspiracy.

In the first district H. M. Shaw, the sitting member, was renominated and was defeated by Robert T. Paine, an American. In the second, Thomas Ruffin was re-elected over Thomas J. Latham, an American. Warren Winslow was chosen in the third over David Reid, a former Democrat but

now an American. In the fourth the Democrats nominated George W. Thompson of Wake, and, upon his refusal, L. O'B. Branch, who defeated James B. Shepard. In the fifth John Kerr, the Whig member, was dropped partly because of the vigor of his advocacy of the Kansas-Nebraska bill and more because of the corresponding vigor of his opposition to the Know-Nothing movement. Edwin G. Reade was chosen in his place and, though the Democrats supported Kerr who now joined their party, was elected. In the sixth the Democrats nominated George W. Boyd who declined to run and A. M. Scales was chosen. R. C. Puryear, the Whig incumbent, defeated him. Burton Craige was again successful in the seventh, defeating S. N. Stowe, an American, as was Thomas L. Clingman in the eighth who defeated L. B. Carmichael.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1856

The steady growth of the Know-Nothings gave much encouragement to the entire opposition in the fall and winter of 1855, and, as by that time the organization was an open one, many difficulties due to its secrecy were removed and hope rose again that the Democracy might be overcome.

The American convention met at Greensboro, April 10. C. T. N. Davis of McDowell, was temporary chairman, and Sion H. Rogers, president. The platform was the usual Whig platform with two changes. One of these was a plank declaring the approval of the party of the adoption of a scheme of internal improvements which would not add any burdens to the people in the way of taxation. This qualification shows the influence of a feeling that was gaining strength in the opposition. Since the Democrats had accepted internal improvements, there were many of the opposition who were against any further development and still more who were indifferent on the subject. This feeling in a lesser degree extended to common schools as well. The other change in the platform is to be seen in the resolution which follows:

Whereas there exist various and conflicting opinions among Whigs and Democrats both as to the propriety of amending the State Constitution, as well as the manner and extent to which amendment should be made;

Resolved, That in order that the paramount principles of Americanism may not be trammelled in the ensuing contest by vexed State questions made up by former political organizations, the American party, eschewing sectional issues in the State as in the Union, declare their purpose of abiding by and maintaining the representative basis of the present Constitution.

This resolution was entirely indefinite on the question of amendment and left opposition leaders free to oppose any

change. The *Register*, throughout the campaign, bitterly opposed the adoption of free suffrage as did several other papers and a number of leaders.

Only two names had been mentioned in connection with the nomination, George Davis and John A. Gilmer, and the former was not a candidate. For that matter, neither was Gilmer, who wrote a public letter declining to consider the nomination, but when he was unanimously selected, he reconsidered and accepted. The convention was a shouting, enthusiastic, and confident assembly of two hundred and fifty delegates.

John Adams Gilmer was born in Guilford County in 1805. He received his education under Dr. Caruthers and then taught in Laurens County, South Carolina, for several years. Returning to North Carolina he studied law under Judge Murphey and was admitted to practice in 1833. He faced in the practice of his profession the most eminent members of the North Carolina bar and his rise was naturally slow; yet in comparatively few years he won a distinguished place among distinguished colleagues. In 1846 he was sent to the state Senate and served for five terms, proving himself a legislator of ability. A man of unusual geniality and charm of manner, and a good mixer, he was widely popular, and his choice as a candidate was about the best that his party could have made.

The Democratic convention met as usual in Raleigh, assembling four days after the American meeting in Greensboro adjourned. James E. Williams of Caswell, was temporary chairman and Jesse E. Shepherd of Cumberland, president. Forty-six counties were represented by about two hundred and seventy-five delegates. The platform endorsed the principle of popular sovereignty and commended the behavior of Northern Democrats in relation to slavery and sectional questions generally. It condemned the Know-Nothing party as dangerous in tendency and practice. It declared Pierce and Dobbin the choice of the North Carolina Democracy for President and Vice President. When state

affairs were reached, free suffrage, internal improvements, and common schools received hearty and unqualified endorsement. Bragg was unanimously renominated and W. S. Ashe, W. W. Avery, Bedford Brown and R. R. Heath were appointed delegates to the national convention.

The campaign was uninteresting and today affords a depressing view of political conditions generally in the State. According to the Democrats, the American party was a secret society organized in the interest of the abolition movement and controlled entirely by a small group of leading abolitionists. The American argument was even more banal. Democratic success, according to the Know-Nothings, meant the absolute control of American politics by the pope with the strong likelihood of his emigration to the United States to become President, or at least to become governor of North Carolina. The similarity between this argument and those used in opposition to the ratification of the United States Constitution in the Hillsboro convention of 1788 is striking. Every attempt was now made to arouse religious prejudice and feeling against foreigners.

The slavery question played probably a much greater part beneath the surface than is apparent to-day. Not that it did not appear openly. The assault of Brooks upon Sumner met with considerable approval and the *Standard* said that the former was "indeed a noble specimen of the true Southern gentleman." To so great an extent had the slavery question debauched the morals of the community. The North Carolina delegation in Congress also supported him, and Reade won some criticism by voting, alone of all the Southern members to censure Keith for his part in the assault.

The opposition still controlled the major part of the State press and of the thirty-seven political papers in the State, twenty-two supported Gilmer. They were the *Asheville Spectator*, *Concord Gazette*, *Greensboro Patriot*, *Charlotte Whig*, *Lexington Flag*, *Hillsboro Recorder*, *Raleigh Star*, *Raleigh Register*, *Milton Chronicle*, *Weldon Patriot*,



*Murfreesboro Patriot, Elizabeth City Sentinel, Edenton Banner, Plymouth Villager, Washington Times, Wilmington Herald, Fayetteville Argus, Fayetteville Observer, Asheboro Bulletin, Salisbury Watchman, Salisbury Herald, and Ocean Banner.*

Just at the close of the campaign a great American rally was held at Guilford Battle Ground at which Morehead, Graham, Davis, Rayner, and Henry K. Nash were speakers. The proceedings of the meeting, the enthusiasm displayed here and elsewhere, and the activity of the leaders, all go to indicate the hopefulness and indeed, confidence of victory, which the opposition unquestionably felt. Gilmer made a strong campaign and enthusiasm was continuous. But the Democrats were excellently organized, North Carolina did not like secret political societies and the Americans could not shake off the facts of its origin, and Bragg was a powerful campaigner. The result showed a majority for Bragg of 12,628 in a total vote of 102,568 and the legislature was Democratic in both houses, the majority being sixteen in the Senate and forty in the House.

The state campaign out of the way, the Democrats entered into the presidential contest with great vigor, determined at last to carry the State which had not chosen Democratic electors since 1836. Buchanan had long been a favorite in the State and Pierce's defeat was probably not a cause of very deep regret. The opposition, of course, had no hope of carrying the State and were divided among themselves. Kenneth Rayner was nominated for Vice President by the Northern wing of the American party which seceded from the convention which nominated Fillmore. He declined to accept the nomination, but the fact of his nomination served as a peg on which the *Standard* and the Democrats generally could hang some more charges of abolitionist tendencies among the opposition. In the closing days of the campaign he went to Pennsylvania where he made a number of speeches advocating a coalition of the opposition to the Democrats in Pennsylvania in order to defeat them in that State. These



speeches of his were highly commended by the Republican press and leaders, and, in consequence, Rayner was bitterly criticised at home by the Democrats and privately by many of his own party.

Probably the most significant and interesting happening of the presidential campaign in North Carolina was the Hedrick case at the University. Benjamin S. Hedrick, professor of agricultural chemistry, was a native of Davidson County and an alumnus of the University. A product of an anti-slavery community, his feeling against slavery had been strengthened by residence in the North, and by 1856 he had come to see the peculiar institution in its true light as the greatest burden borne by the mass of white people of the South. In state politics he was a Democrat and in August voted for Governor Bragg, but in a response to a direct question, addressed to him on election day by one of the students, he replied that he would vote for Fremont if there was an electoral ticket in the State. The matter came to Holden's ear and in the issue of the *Standard* of September 17, he hinted strongly at the presence of a Fremont supporter in the faculty of some college of the State. On September 29, he published a letter from J. A. Engelhard, then a law student in the University, signed "Alumnus," in which he made the charge, but without mentioning Hedrick's name, and after attacking him bitterly, demanded the dismissal of the offending professor from the University. Interestingly enough, the article was full of denunciation of the dismissal of Judge Loring from the Harvard faculty because of his upholding the fugitive slave law. Hedrick was a man of high spirit and could not endure attack without any answer. Accordingly he sent his "Defense" to the *Standard* which, on October 4, published it.

The Defense was a manly acknowledgement of his political beliefs and of his opposition to slavery. Incidentally his argument was unanswerable. Great excitement followed. Meetings of the executive committee of the trustees and of the faculty followed. The former was restrained from im-

mediate action and the latter drew up a series of resolutions declaring that the views of Hedrick were not shared by the rest of the faculty. The press was filled with denunciation, the *Standard*, of course, taking the lead. The trustees were urged by popular clamor to dismiss Hedrick peremptorily and they finally yielded and October 19, the executive committee dismissed him, although legally it had no power in the matter. The incident stands out as clear proof of how far slavery had annihilated free thought and free speech in the South as well as in the North.

Secession was discussed during the campaign with more interest than ever before in the State. Holden was an avowed advocate of secession in the event of Fremont's election and a considerable number of Democratic leaders were in full agreement with him. Clingman in October issued an address to the people of North Carolina in which he outlined a definite plan for disunion if Fremont should be successful. Another indication of the definite nature of the Democratic opinion on the subject was the meeting in Raleigh in October of Governor Wise of Virginia and Governor Adams of South Carolina, who were guests of Governor Bragg ostensibly to attend the State fair. Other Southern governors were expected but failed to come. An informal consultation was held at the governor's mansion and several prominent men were invited to be present, including W. W. Holden, M. A. Bledsoe, and L. O'B. Branch. Instead of being a radical meeting it was the contrary, owing to the conservative position taken by Governor Bragg. The presence of the two visiting governors attracted attention and the opposition charged that it was the conclusion of a definite disunion plot and the press denounced the supposed "schemes of treason and disunion," and demanded to know by what right governors of other States came to North Carolina to perfect plots and thus "hitch North Carolina to the car of disunion."

The election resulted in the choice of Buchanan electors by a majority of 12,914 in a total vote of 72,060. The loss

of more than 30,000 votes in the total as compared to the state election can be explained by the fact that Democratic success was certain and that many of the opposition were in sympathy with the Democrats on national questions and, feeling entirely secure, stayed away from the polls.

When the legislature met, W. W. Avery was elected speaker of the Senate over M. L. Wiggins and Jesse G. Shepherd speaker of the House over James M. Leach. Most of the governor's message was devoted to discussion of internal improvements and public education, but he commented on the alarming political situation and recommended the furnishing of arms to military schools.

The session was devoid of any particular interest. The opposition was so outnumbered that all they could do was to try and call public attention to every action of the majority in the hope that somewhere might be found the basis for popular opposition. They were particularly angry when the speaker of the Senate refused to entertain a proposed amendment to the bill for the suffrage amendment which was now on its final passage. An amendment to it would serve to postpone its submission to the people for two more years and make necessary its passage by another legislature and it was of course with this in view that it was offered. The amendment bill passed the Senate thirty-nine to eight, all the negative votes except one—that of William Eaton—being cast by Americans, and passed the House ninety-eight to five, all the negatives coming from Americans. D. F. Caldwell of Guilford, offered an elaborate protest against its passage, declaring his opposition to the principle and to the method. His protest is an excellent statement of the traditional Whig attitude on the subject.

The congressional campaign of 1857 was even more uninteresting than the state campaign just described. A bitter quarrel between John W. Syme, the editor of the *Raleigh Register* and the Hales of the *Fayetteville Observer*, betrayed a certain cleavage of sentiment in the opposition and plans were immediately made among the opposition leaders

either to drive Syme out or establish a new organ for the party.

In the first district, H. M. Shaw was again the democratic candidate and Robert T. Paine declining to run again, W. N. H. Smith received the American nomination but was defeated. In the second Thomas Ruffin was elected without opposition as were Winslow, Branch, and Craige in the third, fourth, and seventh respectively. S. E. Williams was the Democratic candidate in the fifth, opposed by Maurice Q. Waddell of Chatham and John A. Gilmer, both Americans. The case of the last two was finally submitted to a committee which decided in favor of Gilmer, and Waddell withdrew. Gilmer was elected. Reade, the sitting member, had refused to be a candidate. In the sixth A. M. Scales defeated R. C. Puryear and in the eighth Clingman defeated Z. B. Vance, who was now forging to the front as a power in western politics.

The free suffrage amendment was submitted to the people at this election and in a total vote of 69,477 received a majority of 30,713 and thus became a part of the Constitution.

The general results showed small encouragement to the opposition to further connection with the American movement, and from this time it rapidly disappeared.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1858

During the Fall of 1857 there was much discussion of distribution and it was evident that many Democrats were seriously inclining towards that policy. Walter F. Leak made a formal announcement of his candidacy for governor on that issue, and Duncan K. McRae of New Bern, was known to favor the policy. It was, however, early evident that the Democratic party would maintain its traditional stand in opposition. Of course, the question had no real bearing on state affairs directly, since its decision was purely national, but once more state issues had disappeared and national questions dominated state politics to the great detriment of the State.

In January, McRae made speeches at Wilmington, Fayetteville, Goldsboro, Raleigh and Hillsboro in which he advocated distribution. At this time he was uncertain if he would be a candidate for governor, and was undoubtedly waiting to see what action would be taken by the Democratic party. So far as the candidates for the regular Democratic nomination were concerned, a movement for Holden had appeared early in 1857 and had gained strength steadily.

This did not at all suit the plans and calculations of the dominant forces in the party. Holden was easily the strongest leader in the party but he was disliked by a large number, and the more aristocratic elements were bitterly opposed to him and feared his policies as well as his personal power. Another very serious threat to his chances lay in the strength in the Democratic party of the Whigs who had recently joined and who still hated him for his apostacy—or, in other words, for doing early the very same things they had done late.

All the elements of opposition looked about for a candidate and finally found one in Judge John W. Ellis, who declined to leave the bench or to be a candidate, but who

was known to be willing to accept the nomination. Jesse G. Shepherd was spoken of for the nomination but developed little strength. W. W. Avery, who was very popular in the west, developed considerable strength and was regarded seriously by the other candidates. Judge S. J. Person was endorsed by several counties, but refused to allow the use of his name. A. W. Venable's name was also constantly mentioned in connection with the nomination.

The Democratic executive committee called the convention to meet at Charlotte. This caused great surprise and in the east great dissatisfaction. It was regarded as a stroke in favor of Ellis' candidacy, and Holden's friends were very fearful of its effects upon his candidacy.

In the contest which followed and which was the first pre-convention campaign in the political history of the State, a great deal of bitterness developed and at times it seemed certain that a compromise candidate would be nominated. As was to be expected the Democratic press of the State took an active part in this campaign. Among others the *Charlotte Western Democrat*, *Winston Western Sentinel*, *Fayetteville Argus*, *Goldsboro Tribune*, *Warrenton News*, and *Williamston Banner* were for Holden, while the *Wilmington Journal*, *Salisbury Banner* and *Elizabeth City Pioneer* were for Ellis.

Even the opposition press took sides, usually in a sarcastic way, but sometimes in earnest. The *Register* said in April, "Although not entitled to a seat in the Democratic pew, we have all along been a strong Holden man. We think he is entitled to the nomination and are of opinion that it would be a burning shame if one who has spent his life in making great big men out of the very smallest sort of materials should be refused the reasonable reward he so urgently seeks."

The *Fayetteville Observer*, after quoting part of the first scene of the fourth act of Julius Caesar, said, "Mr. Holden 'is a tried and valiant soldier' who has 'groaned and sweat under the business' until he has made the Democratic party

all powerful in North Carolina. Without him these Democratic lawyers would never have been judges. Governors, Congressmen, legislators—would have been scarcely heard of. But the work is done. And when he or his friends for him ask a participation in the honors of the victory, it is only natural, now as then, that his creatures should ‘take down his load and turn him like the empty ass, to shake his ears and graze in commons.’ How dare an editor of a newspaper, a man who has worked with his own hands, aspire to reward from the Democratic party?”

Both candidates behaved with dignity in this period. The *Standard* was entirely impartial and a stranger would not have known that it was Holden’s paper. As the time for the convention came both sides became more confident. It was practically a certainty that Avery would withdraw and it was thought that Holden would get his strength. Holden was placing his chief reliance in Avery’s strength and there is no shadow of a doubt that if the modern device of a primary had been employed that he would have been overwhelmingly chosen. But the mass of the party had no direct control and the nomination was dictated by politicians. The *Register* said that the reason Ellis received such strong support from lawyers was clear—every one of them expected to be chosen to fill the judgeship he would vacate.

When the convention finally came there was a great outpouring to Charlotte. The convention assembled on April 14 and organized with Capt. John Walker of Charlotte, “The Wheelhorse of Democracy,” as temporary chairman and C. M. Avery of Burke, as president. It was the largest convention that had been held in the State to that time. Fifty-nine counties were represented by 454 delegates in person and twelve other counties were represented by proxies. This left only four counties unrepresented.

The most noticeable thing about the delegates was the startling number of recent Whigs, some of whom were exceedingly prominent and influential in the convention.

The platform commended the administrations of Presi-

dent Buchanan and Governor Bragg and endorsed the policy of internal improvements. Concerning distribution it had the following to say: "That we regard the distribution of the public lands or their proceeds as unconstitutional, anti-Democratic, and impolitic, and its agitation at this time as eminently unpatriotic because being wholly impracticable, the sole tendency of such agitation must be to divide and distract the only party upon which the South can rely for the defense of her rights and interests in the Union."

After the adoption of the platform attention turned to the nomination of a candidate. It was certain by this time that Ellis had a simple majority, but Holden's supporters thought that if the two-thirds rule could be adopted that their candidate would win. The motion, however, was tabled by a small majority. If adopted, it would probably have defeated both candidates. By this time Avery had formally withdrawn, so the contest was between Holden and Ellis. After the failure of the motion, Ellis was nominated on the first ballot, receiving the vote of forty counties against twenty-seven for Holden. The official vote stood 25,051 to 21,594, with 1,203 scattering. Holden took his defeat well and at once urged his friends to activity in behalf of the ticket. This was a disappointment to the Whigs, who had confidently predicted a serious breach in party solidarity as a result of this contest within the party, a new thing in North Carolina politics.

John Willis Ellis was a native of what is now Davidson County, but was then Rowan. He was educated at Randolph-Macon College and at the University, graduating from the latter in 1841. Studying law under Judge Pearson, he was admitted to the bar in 1842. In 1844 he was elected to the House of Commons and was re-elected in 1846 and 1848. While a member of the legislature he was elected judge and thus had been on the bench for ten years. There he had made a fine reputation in spite of his inexperience when he was chosen. He was a man of no exceptional ability, but was uni-



versally popular because of his genial and charming manner and because of his entire sincerity in every relation.

In the meantime a sharp division of sentiment had taken place in the press and in the ranks of the opposition as to the proper course for the party to pursue in relation to the campaign. One faction, headed by the *Register*, favored support of an independent Democrat without holding a convention; the other headed by the *Greensboro Patriot and Flag*, favored united party action through a convention and the nomination of one of their own party. Leak had withdrawn in February, so McRae was the only independent Democrat discussed for support. Agreeing with the *Register* were the following papers which, as a Western Whig editor said, had "gone over to the Beast": the *Wilmington Herald*, *Weldon Patriot*, *Salisbury Watchman*, *Kinston Advocate*, *Newbern Express*, *Salem Press* and *Louisburg Eagle*; while those which with the *Patriot and Flag* favored independent action were the *Asheville Spectator* and *Elizabeth City Sentinel*. Their view was expressed in the following comment of the *Patriot and Flag*: "So far as we are concerned, we can never consent to see the great American Whig party—strong in numbers, strong in intellect, strong in the correctness of its principles and the justice of its cause, consent to enter into a fight headed by a Democrat."

The convention advocates finally called upon Henry W. Miller, chairman of the executive committee, to call a meeting of the committee for the purpose of calling a convention. He replied that since the last campaign there was no committee and that he had no power in the matter. As it was usual for the party executive committee to last from convention to convention this answer excited comment and question, and the *Standard* hinted that possibly a change of heart politically on the part of the chairman was the explanation. In April, on the question of Southern rights, Miller declared himself a supporter of Buchanan's administration and because of his opposition to the principles of "Black Republicanism" de-

clared his intention of acting in the future with the Democratic party.

On April 26 McRae declared himself a candidate for governor on the issue of distribution. He also expressed his opposition to any further increase of the State debt for new internal improvements and asked for non-partisan support. In other respects he was frankly still a Democrat in belief. But like the Democrats of the old school he was lukewarm, if not indeed hostile, to state-supported internal improvements and this won him additional favor from the Whigs, who were relapsing into the former Democratic attitude in the same proportion that the Democrats occupied the former Whig position. In consequence he received the support of the Whigs.

The campaign was extended and given up almost entirely to the discussion of distribution and possible further extension of the system of internal improvements. In the preceding legislature the Whigs had shown a tendency to oppose the western extension and this question figured largely in the campaign. The contest waxed warm at times and Ellis and McRae actually came to blows at Beaufort.

In May Asa Biggs was appointed United States district judge to succeed Judge Henry Potter who, after a service of 56 years, had died the year before, and Governor Bragg at once appointed Clingman to succeed Biggs in the Senate. Thomas Lanier Clingman was born in that part of Surry County which has since become Yadkin, in 1812. He graduated from the University in 1832 and studied law and in 1835 was elected to the House of Commons from Surry. He then moved to Buncombe and in 1840 was elected to the state Senate. In 1843 he was elected to Congress, was defeated for re-election by James Graham, but was again elected in 1847 and had served there ever since. As will be remembered he had left the Whig party in 1852.

Clingman's promotion to the Senate, left a vacancy in the mountain district and a warm contest took place there between W. W. Avery and Zebulon B. Vance.

The result of the election was never in doubt during the campaign. Ellis' majority was 16,383 in a total vote of 96,475, the legislature was Democratic with a majority of fourteen in the Senate and forty-four in the House, and Vance defeated Avery with a majority of more than two thousand.

During the autumn a most interesting political struggle developed. Holden's defeat emboldened to open opposition many of his party who disliked him but had hitherto feared him too much to attack him. From every quarter came attacks upon him and accusations of disloyalty to Ellis and to the party. Holden, as has been said, had behaved very well, accepting his defeat with good grace rather than otherwise and giving to Ellis very loyal support. All this counted for nothing in the desire of his enemies to crush him. The fight was redoubled when it became evident that his name would be presented to the legislature for election to the United States Senate. Here begins the breach between Holden and the States' Rights Democracy which he had organized and led, a breach which in time, although he was the foremost advocate of secession, drove him into the ranks of Union men simply because of the efforts of his enemies in his own party.

His first step was rather towards closer relations with the rank and file of the party. He became an earnest advocate of the popular election of judges and endorsed heartily the movement for ad valorem taxation which was really directed against property in slaves, and endorsed at first the movement in Wake County which led to the organization of the Wake County Workingmen's Association which was the most active organization for a reform in taxation.

When the legislature met Henry T. Clark of Edgecombe, was chosen Speaker of the Senate over Ralph Gorrell of Guilford, and Thomas Settle, speaker of the House, over Dennis D. Ferebee. The matter of first interest before the body was the election of senator. During the autumn the State had been full of the rumor of a combine which was said to



have existed between Clingman, Holden, Biggs and Bragg by which Holden was to be elected governor, Biggs was to resign from the Senate to go on the federal bench, Clingman was to be appointed by Bragg to succeed him and Bragg himself was to be elected to the Senate to succeed Reid.

The story may or may not be true. In any event the failure of Holden to secure the nomination for governor broke the plan somewhat. He was told by his friends that the "combine" had not acted fairly by him and was urged to contest with Bragg for the place in the Senate. He finally consented after his relations with Governor Bragg had become much strained. Before the legislature met he resigned from the Literary Board to which Bragg had appointed him. But the opposition to him was too strong and on the first ballot the vote stood: Bragg, 40; Holden, 36; Reid, 18. On the second ballot Reid's friends who were angry with Holden for entering the contest, went for Bragg and the vote was Bragg, 58; Holden, 36. Holden was later rather regretful that he had opposed Reid even in this way. Bragg was thus elected to succeed Reid, who was greatly hurt by his defeat, and Clingman succeeded himself.

The session lasted ninety-five days, the longest in the history of the General Assembly to that time. It had no record of achievement corresponding. Its early days were spent in selecting the senators, everything else of course being subordinated and it spent a large part of its later time in discussion of the Danville Connection. In 1848, it will be remembered, application had been made for a charter for a road from Greensboro to Danville and in this legislature the proposition was renewed through the influence of John M. Morehead, who was a member of the legislature. A tremendous fight followed directed at first against the proposition on its merits and gradually developing into an attack on Governor Morehead who was known to be the author and inspiration of the bill. The East felt that the North Carolina Railroad would suffer, and against the proposition were arrayed the *Standard*, the *Register*, and a large number of prominent



men including R. R. Bridgers, W. T. Dortch, Pride Jones, John W. Norwood and Dennis D. Ferree. Morehead endured the personal attacks for five days and then rose to make one of the most remarkable, powerful, and successful personal defenses in the legislative history of North Carolina. The Danville Connection, however, was defeated.

A proposition for a convention of the people then came up and was defeated, as was a resolution, introduced by M. A. Bledsoe of Wake, looking to the ad valorem taxation of all property, but which had for its chief purpose the imposition on slave property of some adequate and equitable share of the tax burden.

Jonathan Worth, who was a Whig member of the Senate, brought in a report on the condition of the Western North Carolina Railroad which reflected bitterly upon the management of its president, Charles F. Fisher. Fisher replied and a war of words ensued lasting for nearly two years in which politics played as large a part as the railroad question.

Ellis's inaugural related chiefly to internal improvements in which he had always been deeply interested, but, in a somewhat conservative way, it also touched upon the question of the protection of States' rights. The allusion is as follows: "We are not prepared for the acknowledgment that we cannot enjoy all our constitutional rights in the Union. Should that day unfortunately come, but little doubt need be entertained that our people will act as best comports with their interests and honor and with the sacred memories of the past to whatever the result may lead."

At the close of the session the opposition appointed a state executive committee and began preparations for an active congressional campaign. The year was interesting politically. Holden's struggle with his enemies, particularly those in Wake County where he was engaged in a bitter fight with Cantwell and Whitaker, two rival editors, continued and caught the attention of the whole State without regard to party. The most popular accusation made against him was of attempted domination and the following editorial

comment of the *Standard* was so misinterpreted as to form a base for the charge: "The *Standard* speaks the sentiments, and has the confidence of the Democratic masses of the State, and because of this, and for no other reason, it can kill and make alive."

When Postmaster General A. V. Brown died in 1859 it was supposed that Reid would succeed him, but the condition of his health stood in the way and President Buchanan telegraphed an offer of the position to L. O'B. Branch. The latter was out of reach and did not receive it and the President appointed Joseph Holt. In December, 1860, when Howell Cobb, on account of the secession of Georgia, resigned as secretary of the treasury, Buchanan offered the place to Branch, who declined to accept.

The *Standard* and the *Register* were carrying on their usual warfare and the latter became so bitter and so hostile to the administration and the Democratic party that it finally was able to say, "The *Standard* asks who we will support for the presidency. We answer that we will support any opponent of rotten and corrupt Democracy who is not an abolitionist or Black Republican; and furthermore, we say that as between an abolitionist or Black Republican and a Democrat we will make no choice."

The congressional elections were dominated by the sectional agitation. In the first district, W. N. H. Smith, who was again the Whig candidate, defeated H. M. Shaw. Thomas Ruffin was re-elected in the second without opposition. Winslow was unsuccessfully opposed in the third by M. J. McDuffie, an independent Democrat. In the fourth Linn B. Saunders, another independent Democrat, was defeated by Branch. In the fifth there was the same array of candidates as two years before, S. E. Williams being the Democratic candidate, John A. Gilmer the Whig, and M. Q. Waddell an independent Whig. Gilmer was elected. A. M. Scales was defeated by James M. Leach, the Whig candidate in the sixth. In the seventh Burton Craige was re-elected over S. H. Walkup, who was nominated by the Whigs and

declined, then reconsidered and ran. Vance was again successful in the eighth, defeating David Coleman who had withdrawn from the campaign two years before in favor of Avery. The Whigs had thus elected four members of Congress and were highly pleased with the result. The total vote in the elections, however, showed a Democratic majority of 5,934.

When Congress met in December a deadlock ensued which lasted until February. Gilmer came very near to election as speaker at one time and at another Smith was elected, but before the result was announced several members from Pennsylvania changed their votes. He could at any time have secured the election if he would have agreed to allow the Pennsylvania changed their votes. He could at any time have and means, which they wanted packed in favor of a protective tariff, but he did not care to have it on such terms, and William Pennington, a New Jersey Republican who was serving his first and last term in Congress, was chosen.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE CAMPAIGN OF 1860

The Whigs, highly delighted with the result of the congressional elections of 1859, nerved themselves to further achievements, and determined to carry the election of 1860. The executive committee at once summoned a state convention to meet in Raleigh in February and county meetings followed. It soon became evident that a considerable element of the party favored adoption of the principle of ad valorem taxation as a party issue likely to carry the election. It was equally clear that the Democratic party would not accept it.

The Whig convention met on February 22. R. C. Puryear was president of the meeting. It was a large and enthusiastic body of over two hundred and fifty delegates representing fifty-three counties. John Pool of Pasquotank, Alfred Dockery and George Davis were the only persons mentioned for the nomination and the first mentioned was chosen unanimously. William A. Graham was endorsed for the presidential nomination. The platform advocated ad valorem taxation of all property, demanded a convention of the people to make that and other necessary changes in the constitution, proclaimed the devotion of the party to the Union and demanded its preservation, and bitterly condemned the Democratic administrations, state and national.

John Pool, the nominee for governor, was born in Pasquotank in 1826. He graduated at the University in 1847 and was admitted to the bar the same year. He was immediately very successful in his profession and became known as one of the strongest lawyers in his section of the State. He had been a member of the state Senate in 1856 and in 1858 where he had been one of the leaders of the opposition and had won some reputation. He was a cool, self-reliant, ambitious and utterly unscrupulous man who was willing to win on any terms.



The party was by no means united on its chief issue as many Whigs were utterly opposed and even Pool himself had opposed it and voted against it in the Legislature of 1858. Kenneth Rayner was a strong opponent of the policy from the time it was proposed in the county meetings. Writing to Judge Ruffin in February he said,

Well the convention of the "opposition" party has come off and they have passed a resolution in favor of ad valorem taxation and recommending a convention to change the Constitution so as to enable the Legislature to pass such a tax bill. I voted against it and I will not sustain, but will oppose it before my people. Mr. Badger made a speech in favor of it and Graham who was here is also in favor of it. It was carried by an overwhelming majority, many Eastern men voting for it. I wish I could tell you and talk to you. I could tell you many things about influences which have been at work that would astonish you. As to the effect of this thing—as to the prospect of its being engrafted on our State policy—all now depends upon the action of the Democratic convention, to meet here on the 8th of March. I have conversed with several prominent Democrats and I think they are inclined to oppose it. If the Democratic convention also endorses it, of course the measure will go through the next Legislature with but little resistance. If the Democratic convention takes ground against it, there will be to a very considerable extent a re-organization or recasting of parties.

You insisted on my staying and attending the convention of my party to oppose this thing, and I was in great measure influenced by your wishes. Now I beg of you to attend the convention of your party for the same purpose. I think the prominent Democrats are disposed to take ground against the measure, but they are evidently alarmed and need the strengthening influence of able, calm and dispassionate men of their party. By coming down here and attending the convention you may prevent the carrying out of this mischievous and pernicious measure—for such I regard it.

In March Rayner wrote again:

As I wrote you before, I am most decidedly opposed to this notion of ad valorem taxation, as proposed to the late oppo-

sition convention in this place, and I intend to oppose it with all the power and influence I possess.

What I have to ask of you is this—to sit down when you have a leisure hour, and write down the objections to this measure in the way it strikes you most forcibly—of course I do not wish to tax you so far as to write all the minute details of the subject; but what I desire is that you will present the salient points of the argument.

Having been a member of the Convention of 1835—and therefore in a measure one of the parties to the compact or compromise entered into on this subject, I feel that I am particularly called on to resist this measure.

When the election came Rayner voted the Democratic ticket, declaring that the Constitutional Union party was only a negation.

On the other hand Democrats were favorable to ad valorem, including for some time W. W. Holden. But after the Whig convention he was silent and finally opposed it.

The Democratic convention met at Raleigh, March 8. About three hundred delegates attended, representing sixty-one counties. W. W. Avery was temporary chairman and David S. Reid president. The platform was entirely Southern in the extreme sense and contained a distinct secession threat. Its reply to the Whig demand for ad valorem taxation was a straddle—an endorsement of equality of taxation within the limits of the constitution—a most comfortable statement that might be interpreted as conditions required to mean anything or everything. Governor Ellis was renominated without opposition and W. W. Avery, W. W. Holden, Bedford Brown and W. S. Ashe were chosen delegates to the national convention.

The joint debate was a heated one devoted largely to the state issue in spite of Ellis' efforts to keep national questions to the fore. The Whigs had a powerful argument in the inequality of the taxation system in favor of the slaveholders. The Workingmen's Association had put forth statistics to show that 187,842 slaves, worth \$112,568,800 went untaxed, while those taxed, at the poll rate of 50 cents, 159,925 in

number and worth \$139,000,000, paid only \$75,462. The same amount in taxes would be paid by \$31,000,000, loaned out while the slaves on whom it was paid were valued at \$250,000,000. The discrimination is apparent. It was evident in other ways. Land worth \$1,000 paid a tax of \$1.50 and a negro worth \$1,800 yielded to the State only 50 cents. It is evident that the issue was not a genuine party issue, but one between slaveholders and non-slaveholders. But for the situation of national affairs undoubtedly a new alignment of parties would have resulted and since the non-slaveholders were in the great majority, the ultimate issue is not at all uncertain. The Whigs had made no demand for any exemptions and Ellis used this very cleverly to arouse the people against the plan, telling them that ovens, pots, pans, chickens, and eggs would be taxed. He had on his side the settled disinclination of North Carolinians, suspicious then as now, to meddle with the existing tax system even when relief is promised to the masses. The Whigs of course had a very powerful argument in the fact that North Carolina was the only Southern State that did not tax slaves as property.

The interposition of the national campaign alone saved Ellis from defeat if we may judge from the material now available on the subject. Pool was a stronger man on the stump, was a stronger man in intellect and power generally, and he had the popular and equitable side of the question at issue. Many Whigs had come into the Democratic party on account of the national situation, for John Brown's raid was dominating national politics in the State, but the state issue had won a considerable number of Democrats away from their party, most of them from the non-slaveholding class. Ellis had a majority of 6,340 in a total vote of 112,586 and the Democrats won the legislature with a majority of twelve in the Senate and ten in the House.

Returning now to the national campaign, it will be remembered that the Democratic convention met at Charleston in April. W. W. Avery was chairman of the platform com-



mittee and presented the majority report and defended it in a speech. Holden was prominent in the convention and made a Union speech. W. S. Ashe spoke in quite the opposite vein, warning the convention when the minority report was adopted that it meant the secession from the convention of the Southern delegates, and Bedford Brown also gave a similar warning. When the delegates from the Cotton States withdrew, the North Carolina delegation refused to go and by their action undoubtedly prevented the withdrawal of the delegations from the Border States. When the balloting for the presidential nomination began, North Carolina voted thirteen times as a unit for R. M. T. Hunter, twelve times for Lane, and six times for D. S. Dickinson. Then, until the balloting ceased, her vote was divided between Lane and Douglas, the latter receiving one vote, that of R. P. Dick.

When the convention met at Baltimore, all the North Carolina delegation withdrew except Dick, Holden and J. W. B. Watson. The others joined the seceders in Richmond and took part in the nomination of Breckinridge and Lane. North Carolina Democrats were overwhelmingly in favor of Breckinridge; and while Holden was for some time doubtful whom he would support, he finally decided to favor the Breckinridge ticket with the understanding that the electors would vote for Douglas, if by doing so they could defeat Lincoln. He had returned from Charleston strongly impressed with the necessity of preserving the Union but in a month he was again arguing in behalf of secession. Editorially he said:

But it is said that the Supreme Court may in the future be an unsafe tribunal for the South; that the Black Republicans will obtain control of it and turn its decisions against the slaveholding States. That may be so. At present it is certainly a safe tribunal for the South. It may be changed and no doubt will be, if the Black Republicans should obtain possession of the Government. But what of that? Must we wait until this change is made? Shall we permit Lincoln to pervert the whole power of the Government and in addition to turn the Supreme Court against us? We are for



meeting the enemy at the threshold—for vanquishing him or being vanquished long before his law, his adjudications against us are made. If the people of the South are true to themselves they will never be troubled by the decisions of Black Republican judges. But if they submit to the inauguration and rule of Black Republicans they will bind themselves to submit to the decisions of abolition courts.

The various elements in the country which could not accept the principles of either branch of the Democratic party or of the Republican party met in April and organized the Constitutional Union party with the platform "The Constitution, the Union, and the Enforcement of the Laws," nominated John Bell of Tennessee, and Edward Everett of Massachusetts. These received the enthusiastic support of the North Carolina Whigs led by Badger and Graham.

In August a Douglas convention was held in Raleigh with thirty-one counties represented which chose an electoral ticket. Douglas was present and address the convention. R. P. Dick was the chief leader of the group and was assisted by Thomas Settle, D. K. McRae, H. W. Miller, and a number of lesser lights. Their campaign was active but entirely hopeless. It however gave great alarm to the Breckinridge Democrats who were fearful of losing the State to Bell, who seemingly developed great strength as the campaign progressed.

On the whole the campaign was moderate in tone. After the division of the party the situation was so evidently serious that most speakers were very conservative in expression of opinion. In January Holden, as a result of the John Brown raid, was advocating in the *Standard* war preparations and telling B. S. Hedrick, who had written him a letter, that he would not publish it, but that if he came South with the abolition invaders that the State would welcome him and them "with bloody hands to hospitable graves," but in the autumn this sort of talk was chiefly notable in its absence. Rather there was a sort of stillness, a tenseness, of waiting, of hoping against hope that the impending calamity of Re-

publican success with its undesired consequences might be averted.

The result of the election was as follows:

Breckinridge .....	39,711
Bell .....	36,640
Douglas .....	2,245

With this election ends an era.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### NORTH CAROLINA IN 1860

Politically and socially North Carolina in 1860 showed a very remarkable development as contrasted with the North Carolina of 1835. The very atmosphere of the community was different. The phenomenal advance of internal improvements and of public education had liberalized the people to an extent almost undreamed of in 1835. The greater part of this development had taken place in the last decade prior to 1860.

In population the growth of the State can be seen from the following table:

#### *White Population*

		Per Cent. Increase	Rank
1840.....	484,870	2.54	10
1850.....	553,028	14.05	12
1860.....	629,942	14.42	15

#### *Free Colored*

1840.....	22,732	13.31	8
1850.....	27,463	20.81	5
1860.....	30,463	10.92	6

#### *Slaves*

1840.....	245,817	.08	5
1850.....	288,548	17.38	6
1860.....	331,059	14.73	7

#### *Aggregates*

1840.....	753,419	16.31	7
1850.....	869,039	2.1	10
1860.....	991,464	14.2	10

Of this population only 3,298 were foreign born, a very slight increase in the number over 1850. In both census years this was the lowest number of any of the States in the Union. Of the natives of other States, 22,044 were living in North Carolina while 272,606 were living outside the

State. This population in 1850 lived on 56,963 farms with an average acreage of 316. There were in the State 1,184 farms of over 500 acres and only 311 with over 1,000 acres.

The material changes were also striking. In 1850 the State had 248 miles of railroad, and in 1860, 889. In the former year there were 18 banks and branches, while in the latter there were 60, and the capital had almost doubled. In the real value of property, real and personal, there was an increase of 58.17 per cent, the amount for 1860 being \$358,739,399, and for 1850 \$226,800,472. The rank of the State in this respect in 1850 was 11, and in 1860, 20. The assessed value in 1860 was \$292,297,602. The State was of course agricultural and its rank in this respect compared with the other States is interesting:

TABLE

<i>Product</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Wheat .....	14
Corn .....	11
Rye .....	13
Oats .....	16
Peas and beans .....	2
Irish potatoes .....	22
Sweet potatoes .....	2
Butter .....	29
Cheese .....	24
Wool .....	18
Flax .....	6
Rice .....	3
Tobacco .....	5
Horses .....	13
Asses and mules .....	11
Oxen .....	21
Milch cows .....	14
Other cattle .....	13
Sheep .....	15
Swine .....	8
Value of stock .....	15



In manufacturing there had been considerable development with the promise of more. The manufacturing situation in 1860 is best seen from the following:

Number of establishments.....	3,689
Capital .....	\$9,693,703
Cost of raw material (annual) .....	\$10,203,228
Number of hands	
Men .....	12,106
Women .....	2,111
Cost of labor .....	\$2,689,441
Value of product .....	\$16,678,698

Government was comparatively inexpensive and in the amount of taxes paid in the different States, North Carolina stood twenty-first in 1860 as against fifteenth in 1850.

Intellectually, the State was improving. Twenty years of public schools, with the system for eight years of that time under Calvin H. Wiley, were beginning to show results. The school situation in the two census years appears in the following:

Number of schools 1850, 2,657; number of teachers 2,730; number of pupils 104,095; amount expended \$158,564; number of schools 1860, 2,994; number of teachers 2,928; number of pupils 105,025; amount expended \$268,719.

There were also many private schools and academies, each class showing an increase over 1850. The number of illiterates had decreased from 73,566 in 1850 to 68,128 in 1860.

While in many respects the outlook was encouraging, the State was still ridden by national politics, ever the curse of the people. With the adoption of the free suffrage amendment which had performed an incredibly valuable service to the State in awakening interest in state affairs, it looked as if the people would relapse into their former indifference. In 1860 the question of ad valorem taxation gave promise to renewed interest in State politics. The following extract

from a letter written in 1857, shows the feeling of the few who recognized the greatness of the evil:

It was intended by the framers of our governmental organism, both State and Federal, that the will of the whole people should be ascertained in the way just pointed out (Legislative elections in the States), and experience has taught us, that any departure from our organic laws, and any lack of due observance of them while in force, are attended with direful results. This was never more obvious than in the case of this State. Who can say, without fear of successful contradiction, that North Carolina, with all her natural advantages, is not this day, far behind her sister States in an agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial point of view? Is she not rather following slowly in the wake of other States? We are forced to admit that she is. And why? Is it because she has no rich and productive soil that invites the industry of the husbandman? No. Is it because the manufacturer cannot manufacture cotton fabrics, woollens, flour, tobacco, shoes, boots, etc., etc.? No. Is it because a widespread and enriching commerce would not certainly grow out of a well directed system of agriculture and manufactures, fostered by an extensive system of internal improvements? No. There is, in fact, no good reason—there never has been any plausible reason, why North Carolina should not soon be in advance of most of the States of the Union, in point of her agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. On the contrary, there are many powerful reasons why she should be a great and prosperous State. She possesses the natural elements that form the sure basis of wealth and power, and these only require the hand of industry properly applied to develop them in all their strength and worth. Her soil, for the most part, is rich and astonishingly productive, and is susceptible of the highest state of cultivation. She has water power unsurpassed, sufficient to drive any amount of machinery. She has harbors on her seaboard that will compare favorably with the best on the Atlantic coast, and the surface of her territory is such that railroads, leading from almost every point of trade, may be built with a very moderate outlay of means.

Why, let me ask, have all these advantages been so long

neglected? There must be some cause for this novel condition of our State. Our people are intelligent, industrious, and enterprising when properly encouraged, and it is not because they are wanting in these indispensable requirements of success. If we will look at the leading characteristics of our Legislatures and legislation, we may find the prime cause of all our backwardness and neglect of precious and valuable interests and advantages. The Legislature and legislation have almost uniformly been of a partisan and political character. Whig, Democrat, or American, Federal politics entered chiefly into the election of legislators, and the result was political legislation. Witness the proceedings of our Legislatures, and say if this is not true. What do our Governors and legislators talk about for the most part, but Federal politics and the offices to be filled? How much time has been lost in electing our Senators to Congress, our Attorney Generals, and solicitors—in discussing empty resolutions touching matters with which the State Legislature had nothing to do. Look to the journals of, and the debates in the Legislature, and every conservative man will learn to his supreme disgust. One will be astonished and dispirited to see how completely Federal politics control our best interests, and that too, in our halls of State legislation. Look to our legislation upon matters of pressing and practical importance, and no one can fail to see how great detriment the whole State has sustained from time to time by political and office-seeking Legislatures. Look, for example, at our system of internal improvements, the great mainspring of commercial wealth and prosperity at this day. Who can tell where it begins, or where it is eventually to end? What is the settled policy of the State upon this great matter of public concern? Who can tell? What great points of trade and commerce are to be united by railroads and navigators? What have we not now, roads giving our seaboard and the whole State a direct connection with the great heart of the Mississippi Valley, so that our State might enjoy the incalculable benefits of that commerce that ought to belong to it? Misguided honesty and political legislation is the cause. Who dares to say that ever upon the internal improvement interests of the State, Federal party politics has not exerted an unwholesome influence?



Indeed, the time has fully come when the people of North Carolina ought to look to her immediate interests—when her people ought to throw off party ties in the election of Governor and members of the Legislature, and when their votes should be influenced in these elections by questions of State policy solely. Politicians and office seekers should be trampled under foot, and the people should call upon the candidates for office and not the candidates upon the people to elect him.

The slavery situation in the State furnishes a most interesting field of study. North Carolina, like Virginia in the early years after the Revolution and even thereafter, looked upon slavery as an evil. During all these years anti-slavery sentiment was freely expressed and various organizations were founded for securing emancipation, the most notable being the North Carolina Manumission Society with headquarters at New Garden which had over 30 separate branches by 1830. Naturally the feeling was strongest among the numerous Quakers in the State and they were the most active, but it was not at all confined to them. Cotton growing was a negligible interest in the State and the large plantation was the exception. Hence slavery was not nearly so profitable and the interest was not so shielded as in some of the other Southern States.

The rise of the abolition movement in the North with its loud, unjust, violent, and threatening attacks upon slaveholders as well as slavery changed this condition. The Southampton insurrection only hastened the process. Opponents of slavery within the State ceased to agitate against slavery and began to defend it. The Manumission Society and kindred organizations disappeared. Laws against the negro, whether slave or free, became, on the statute books at least harsher and more rigid. The free negroes were deprived of the suffrage. By 1849 opposition to abolitionist doctrines had entered politics and each party regularly charged as its most damning indictment against the other that it had a leaning in national affairs towards the abolitionists, or that it was controlled by them. Politics, not economics, solidified North



Carolina sentiment in favor of slavery, and politics was responsible for the complete suppression in behalf of slavery of free thought and free speech which now followed in respect to the whole question. Not that slavery was not increasingly valuable, viewed from one angle. With Virginia, North Carolina discovered that the breeding and selling of slaves to the Southern market paid well, and hence the prices of slaves in North Carolina rose steadily until in 1859 and 1860 they reached their highest point. It is said that in those two years the two States sold more than 100,000 slaves to the South. If that be true, and there is no reason to suppose it false, the reason for the advance in the price of slaves is clear.

In spite of these facts, slavery was a curse to the vast majority of white people in the State. Consider the question of slave ownership, by no means the most important consideration. In 1860 there was a total of 34,658 slaveholders owning 331,059 slaves. The distribution of the latter is most interesting.

<i>Slaveholders</i>	<i>No. Slaves Owned</i>
6440 .....	1
4017 .....	2
3068 .....	3
2546 .....	4
2245 .....	5
1887 .....	6
1619 .....	7
1470 .....	8
1228 .....	9
4044 .....	10 to 14
2029 .....	15 to 19
1997 .....	20 to 29
870 .....	30 to 39
474 .....	40 to 49
423 .....	50 to 69
188 .....	70 to 99
118 .....	100 to 199
11 .....	200 to 299
4 .....	300 to 500

It will be noted that more than half of the slaveholders—18,316—owned not more than five slaves, and therefore that their real economic interest lay with the non-slaveholders. If we add those who owned less than ten, most of whom were of the same class, we find the total is 24,520, leaving the small total of 10,158 who owned ten or more. Of course the total of the slaveholding class was greater than the number of slaveholders since their families must be included. The relative numbers were approximately 173,290 of the slaveholding class as against 456,652 in the non-slaveholding class.

For the non-slaveholders and that part of the other class mentioned above slavery was a bond and a shackle. Labor was not only cheapened but degraded and the door of opportunity was to a great extent closed. Consciousness of this came slowly to the State as a whole, but the flood of immigrants moving to the free North and West to found there abolitionist families is testimony beyond impeachment that the more progressive elements of the non-slaveholding population were finding it out individually.

It cannot be said that anti-slavery feeling ever died in North Carolina, for among the Quakers at least it survived, but it was silent from 1835 until after 1850. By that time a new leaven was at work, due to better education, better means of communication with the other sections of the State and the rest of the world, and visible and growing evidences of the effects of slavery. Daniel R. Goodloe, who left the State in 1844, and in 1848 became one of the editors of the *National Era*, an abolition paper published in Washington, was the first of a group of North Carolinians to become outspoken and active opponents of slavery. He became convinced by the arguments used in the State in 1831 in defense of slavery that it was wrong, and further study and reflection made him believe it wrong for other than humanitarian reasons. Hinton Rowan Helper, the most important of the North Carolina abolitionists, hated the negro and based the entire argument of his famous *Impending Crisis* on the economics of slavery and the non-slaveholders, and his main thesis was

unanswerable. He represents perfectly the point of view of the educated and thinking non-slaveholder. Hedrick also represents the revolt against slavery for economic and social reasons.

One of the clearest indications of the spread of anti-slavery sentiment is to be seen in the fact that by 1860 the *New York Tribune*, the most hated probably of all the anti-slavery newspapers, had about 200 subscribers in the State and other similar papers were also circulated in increasing numbers. Abolitionists traveled over the State ostensibly as peddlers, booksellers, or preachers, but really circulating tracts, newspapers, or Helper's book. In 1860 four were known to be engaged in this work in Guilford County alone. They were George W. Vestal, Daniel Worth, Samuel Turner, and Jesse Wheeler. It is not doubtful that there were many more in the same locality as well as in other sections. It became increasingly difficult to convict such offenders and finally they were regularly tried by juries composed entirely of slaveholders.

The final and by far the most significant movement against slavery took, as was to be expected, an economic form. The demand for ad valorem taxation of slave property was a conscious attempt to secure justice in taxation and unconsciously was a movement of the non-slaveholders, led by the artisan class, against slavery itself. There is to my mind scarcely a doubt that had not the war intervened the issue would have led to a complete reorganization of parties which in time—and no long time—would have put the State in the hands of the non-slaveholders and ultimately would have made of North Carolina a free State.

The State in 1835 was decadent; in 1860 it was steadily moving forward. One can almost believe that the very nature of the people was being changed. The rapidly growing expenditure of public money for internal improvements and public education was heartily approved by the majority of the people. Conservative they still were, but they were awake and from economic progress were looking to intellectual and

political progress. The future was bright and the horrors of the war and of reconstruction are intensified to the student of North Carolina history because of the wonderful educational work that they interrupted, the progressive spirit that they stifled, and the faith in the future that they destroyed.



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